When Ohio Street Was Opened

By DOROTHY CLARK

As we drive out east on Ohio boulevard these days of one-way streets, did you ever realize that the street was once closed at the C & E.I. Railroad crossing? Just as Walnut street is now closed, but may soon be opened? The opening of this Ohio street crossing by the railroad and the city officials was quite an event.

This fact was called to my attention by Mr. W. C. Twigg, Sr. In his extensive collection of pictures of early Terre Haute, Mr. Twigg found one of the the street-opening ceremonies. In this old photograph is shown Mayor Henry C. Steeg, seated in his horse and buggy at the crossing of the railroad tracks and Ohio street. There are a few other unidentified officials and workers who took part in the street opening ceremonies in the photograph also.

Dorothy J. Clark

There has probably never been a more complicated case in the history of Indiana than the legal proceedings that grew out of the first efforts made by the city in 1883 to establish a grade crossing over the E. & T. H. tracks at Ohio street. The railroad wanted to build a viaduct over Ohio street for the street traffic, but the city fathers didn't go along with the idea. They wanted the city to have the right-of-way for a through street at that point.

Railroad Sued City.

In 1902 the E. & T. H. Railroad sued the city for $200,000 damages, which they believed would result in the opening of Ohio street. The lawsuit was taken to Parke County and the railroad company was awarded $60,000 damages. The case was appealed to the Supreme Court and was still pending when the City Council voted to issue bonds to pay the judgement.

To further complicate matters at this point, the City Council was enjoined pending the lawsuit of J. G. Heinl to restrain the city from issuing bonds. The local court's decision left the city free to issue bonds to the amount of $40,000 and the other $20,000 was to be raised from property owners. This last action was reported in detail in the Terre Haute Express of February, 1903, under the headline — "One Step Nearer Ohio Street Opening."

Gilbert Avenue Paved.

Other city progress reported at that time was the paving of Gilbert avenue from Wabash to Orchard (due, no doubt, to the pet project of the Mayor, the park on Wabash to be named after him, Steeg Park, purchased by the city for a sum of $25,000). Fourth street was being paved with brick from Poplar to Hulman. The city fathers also voted $175,000 for the new river bridge. The formal opening of Fort Harrison Club was announced and steamboats were to run at regular intervals to Fort Harrison beginning at 9 a.m. the following Sunday. All these events and many more were reported in April, 1903.

By September 1, 1903, an Indianapolis firm had bought the bonds and as soon as they were printed and received here, they would be signed by Mayor Steeg and City Clerk Buckingham and returned to Indianapolis. For the bonds the city was to receive $44,000 plus $900 premiums — the bonds to draw 4% interest and run for 20 years. The Mayor said, "as soon as we get this money we will pay the full $60,000 to the Parke County Circuit Court, as we already have $21,500 on hand." On Sept. 17 the city's attorneys Foley and McNutt took the checks to Rockville as promised.

Street Formally Opened.

From this time until the following Spring, the railroad was busily trying to fulfill its part of the bargain. Ohio street was formally opened across the E. & T. H. tracks a little after 10 o'clock on the morning of April 1, 1904.

There was no brass band, no speeches, but Mayor Steeg was there with his "dollar tax rate smile," and drove the last spike, a silver one, donated by the railroad, in the west end of the crossing.

A thousand or more spectators cheered as the mayor struck blow after blow on the silver spike, the last act in the long war between the railroad and the city for possession of Ohio street. Also in attendance were City Attorney Filey, street Commissioner Stokes, Chief of Police Lyons and Fire Chief Daugherty.

It seems that General Agent John R. Connelly of the railroad, felt that Cornelius Meagher with "Old Nancy" should be the first across the tracks in view of his fight for the opening of the street. But as representative of the city, Daugherty insisted on his right to be the first.

Near Collision.

Joe Mauch, driving a delivery wagon, was in the race to cross from the east side. As soon as the engine used to block the crossing backed south with the line of freight cars, Mr. Mauch turned in and came within inches of running into Chief Daugherty in his city rig which was waiting for the freight cars to get by the crossing so he could get over the last track.

According to Charles W. Hyde of the railroad, there were 36,000 feet of timber in the crossing. The crowd had begun to gather before 9 o'clock, and the construction gang had been working night and day to get the crossing planked. The previous night the men had worked by torchlight.

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The final results of the race across the tracks were: Daugherty, first; Meagher, second; R. L. Alder, first wheel man to cross; W. L. Holdaway, first with a coal wagon; Patsy Mahaney, third with a rig; first engine to cross the silver spike was C.&E.I. No. 85.

Now the big question is, who will be the first across the tracks at Walnut street?

Days of the Interurban Lines In Terre Haute

By DOROTY J. CLARK

1 NOV 10 1957

A few days ago, a newcomer to Terre Haute asked me the meaning of the stop numbers on the Lafayette Road north of the city. It suddenly occurred to me that though the days of the interurban lines have passed into history, they have left many permanent reminders of their earlier existence.

To my knowledge, there are only two interurban motermen still living in this city. One of these is John R. Rardin, 2032 North Seventh street, who is a hale and hearty 86 years old. He was born in Edgar County, Ill., and came to Terre Haute the last day of 1899.

Dorothy J. Clark

He and his wife, the former Hannah Sprague, lived at 621 Cherry street, the former Hudnut House, where they were living when the Hotel Deming was being built. His earliest memories of the city include the wheat and oat fields east of Nineteenth street on Wabash avenue, nothing but a few farm houses north of Maple avenue and south of Hulman street.

Mr. Rardin's first job was at the Underwood Furniture Store on South Fourth street, where he was employed as a salesman. His second employer was Mr. Lenhart who purchased this store. He quit this job to become a city street car motorman for six months, and in 1901 became an interurban motorman, the youngest man so employed by Mr. Nash, the superintendent.

Being such a junior operator, it was quite an honor to be chosen to operate the second interurban to Brazil and to Sullivan, which took the officials on an inspection trip of the new lines. Some of the motormen he remembers are John Brewster, Tom Kirkham, Joe Elliott, Bob Martin, Charles Knisely, Harvey Sprague (his brother-in-law), Bill Hess (the other motorman mentioned as still living), and Pat Haley (later a city policeman, and the one who taught Mr. Rardin on the Clinton line).

He remained on the Clinton line for 14 years and could tell me quite a few of his experiences. There were 76 stops on the Clinton line, including Terre Haute and Clinton, with a booster station located at Atherton. The fare to Clinton and Brazil was 25 cents; 35 cents to Sullivan and Paris, Ill.

Top salary was 37 cents an hour for 10 hours a day. The city motorman didn't get that much. But, Mr. Rardin reminded me that money went farther in those days. At that time he paid only $6 a month for house rent, and could spend $3 at the grocery store for a week's groceries. What a com-

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parison this makes with the $1.
per hour the bus drivers comman
now!

The present bus station on W
bash avenue between Eighth ar
Ninth streets was the former si
of the Interurban Terminal. T
building is arcade style with a
open passageway from Wabash
the waiting station in the rear. T
interurbans were electric cars ru
on racks with trolley wires abov
the car. Wires were charged wit
electricity from power statio
along the tracks. Usually the ca
ran alone, but sometimes at rus
hours there were several section
run one after the other. From
Terre Haute there were inte
urbans to Indianapolis, Sullivar
Clinton and Paris, Ill. The firs
lines in Indiana were built for sho
distances only. The electric line
became very popular as the
charged less per mile than th
railroads. They also ran man
cars a day. Indianapolis becam
the greatest interurban center i
the world.

Terre Haute got its first stree
railway during the '80's, but th
extension of the lines to suburban points and maintenance of first class service didn't come until the late 1890's. The line to Paris opened in the fall of 1907.

The interurban lasted approximately forty years. It was after World War I, when highways were made better, and the gravel roads began to be used by automobiles, busses and trucks. Then the interurbans had less and less business. The bus line from Terre Haute to Clinton charged 5 cents less than the interurban fare and took away its business at a great rate.

Discontinued in 1941.

One by one, the many electric nes were sold, tracks taken up, nd the last interurban car made its last trip in Indiana in 1941. It was very unfortunate that it ceased operation for it would have been a great asset during World War II with its gas rationing and other transportation difficulties. The last run was the year that war began.

The interurban brought electricity to rural areas that would not have had it until Rural Electrification. Many rural roads which intersected the interurban lines are still called by the interurban numbered stop, such as Stop 20, Clinton Line.

In 1917, Mr. Rardin quit his job as motorman and became a furniture salesman for Root's Store for four years. Then he was a salesman for the A. Z. Foster Furniture Store for several years, until they went out of business in 1935. In his early days as a furniture salesman, he remembers that a three-piece living room outfit sold for as low as $65. Carpet sold from 35 cents to 40 cents per square yard, and the average room was carpeted for as much as $10 to $15, including the carpet tacks!

Not caring for a life of inactivity and retirement, Mr. Rardin next went to work for the Ohio Oil Co. and operated a filling station at Fruitridge and Wabash avenues for six years. Forced to retire because of his age, he next drove a truck for the city street department until 1948.

Mr. and Mrs. Rardin have celebrated their 62nd wedding anniversary. Though they have no children of their own, they have reared three nieces and nephews, and are enjoying good health and an active life.

Old Railroad Directory Gives Pictures of Valley

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

A Pennsylvania Railroad book loaned to me by Mark Majors, bridge inspector for Penn-Central Railroad, was read with much interest. This compendium of joint arrangements on the Pennsylvania lines west of Pittsburgh was written in September, 1904, by J. C. Culmer and S. W. Mansfield. W. W. Mansfield was the superintendent at that time.

Beginning at Spencer, Ind., in 1904, an incorporated town of 2,500, the book tells how the town granted permission to the Pennsylvania Railroad to tap the artesian well in the courthouse yard and the sewer on Washington St. for sewage and flushing purposes and for the maintenance of two drinking fountains at the passenger station. This station was constructed in 1889; frame, 17x49 ft.; slate roof. The freight station was constructed in 1869; frame, 20x89; the store house was constructed in 1884; frame, 18x31; the master carpenter's store house, 1884; frame, 18x33; the old roundhouse in1868, frame, 50x60, and the water tank in 1879, 14x20.

In 1886 permission was granted to locate the passenger station on the public square, and required sign posts placed at corporation lines. Industries listed were: Spencer Milling Co., Spencer Brick & Tile Co., Baynes Saw Mill, Spencer Co-Op Bottle Co., Beem Mfg. Co. (formerly site of Ellis Bros. Mill), and Spencer Stone Quarry.

Freedom, Ind., population 500 in 1904, formerly had a water tank. The water collected in reservoirs and descended by gravity to the water tank on the railroad right-of-way. This was discontinued in 1880. Samuel Norris, W. H. H. Asbury, William B. Ferguson and R. B. Landrum were involved in the release of the right-of-way for the water conduit. The passenger and freight station was constructed in 1870; frame, 24x60.

At Farmers, Ind., population 50, an old box car body was used as the freight house. Haxton's stock pens and a mail crane completed the railroad arrangements there.

DOROTHY J. CLARK

At Worthington, population 2,200 then, the Indianapolis & Vincennes Division connected with the Evansville & Indianapolis Railroad from Evansville to Terre Haute.

At Switz City, population 750, the frame 22x68 passenger and freight station was constructed in 1868.

At Lyons, Indiana, population 900, the 16x48 passenger and freight station was built in 1873.

Bushrod, population 25, supported a number of railroad buildings. The station was built in 1903; sand house, 1901; ice house, 1902; coal wharf, 1884; coal storage wharf, 1897; engine man's supply house, 1903; and the freight house was an old box car body. At the J. F. Hadley Boarding House, meals were not to exceed 25 cents and there was no charge for lodging.

There was no town at Bee Hunter where Southern Indiana Railroad from Westport to Terre Haute crossed the Indianapolis & Vincennes Division of the Pennsylvania Railroad.

Marco, population 300, built their passenger and freight station in 1868, and the water tank and pump house in 1879.

Continued On Page 5, Col. 1.

Community Affairs File

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TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA

Dorothy Clark

Continued From Page 4.

Dugger, population 1,400, was not incorporated.

Vincennes, population 14,000, was the western terminus of the I. & V. Railroad. The Union Station building was owned by L. L. and Edw. Watson. It was used both as Hotel and Union Passenger Station. The B. & O.S.W. Railroad (formerly the O. & M.) and the E. & T.H. Railroad and the CC.C. & St. L. (formerly the Cairo & Vincennes Railroad) also used this station, constructed in 1860 of brick 24x60 with a tin roof. The freight house was built in 1869; the engine house in 1870 (this brick structure burned in 1901).

Industries in Vincennes were Kixmiller's Brick Yard, Hartman Mfg. Co., Marion Hard Wood Lumber Co., Star Shovel & Range Co., Christian Hoffman, Island Coal Co., and the G. R. Thurgood Elevator.

The incorporated town of Bicknell, population 1,300, boasted of the Chas. A. Phillippi Elevator. The passenger and freight station, frame, 18x30, was first constructed in 1868 at Centertown and moved to Bicknell in 1898.

The Greene County Coal Branch of the Penn. Railroad left the north side of the main track at Bushrod and extended northwest nearly 12 miles to the coal fields in Greene and Sullivan counties. The track was originally built to the Island City Coal Co. No. 1 Mine in 1884. In 1885 it was extended to Dugger under agreement with Dugger & Neal Coal Co. There was no passenger service and no scheduled trains. All the coal was weighed and billed at Bushrod.

Mining Information

This railroad book contained much information about the coal mines in the area. The Linn Mine was located east of Bicknell Station on the west side of the main Penn. Railroad tracks. Operated by the Linn Coal Co., the No. 5 vein under 10 acres plus 110 acres of coal rights, was directed by B. P. Barnes, president; A. L. Brocksmith, sec'y.-treasurer.

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The Bicknell Mine, located 1,813 feet east of Bicknell Station, was operated by Bicknell Coal Co. with C. E. Freeman, sec'y.-treasurer. The No. 6 vein averaged 4 ft. 5 in. thick and produced 250 tons daily.

The Knox Mine, located 4,825 feet west of Bicknell Station, was operated by the Knox Coal Co., W. A. Cullop, pres., Vincennes; W. H. Crozier, treas. and mgr., Bicknell. They owned 900 acres of land, and the pick mine produced 350 tons daily from the No 6 vein averaging 4 ft. 2 in. thick.

The Enterprise Hill Coal & Mining Co. operated a machine mine west of Bicknell producing 100 tons daily from a No. 6 vein. Operated by a Chicago firm, the Chicago & Big Muddy Mine, about 2.4 miles west of Bicknell, was not yet in full production in 1904. This company also owned mines in Williamson county, Illinois.

The Lyons Mine, located ¾ miles east of the Southern Indiana crossing, operated 30 acres of No. 4 vein coal by pick mining 100 tons daily.

The Vandalia Coal Co. No. 2 Mine, located east of South Linton, was the original mine of the field and formerly known as the Island City Mine. The Island City Coal Co. had five mines and interests in the Terhune Coal & Mining Co. Vandalia No. 6 Mine, or the Fluhart Mine, was located west of South Linton and pick mined 600 tons daily. The New Linton Mine was east of Dugger.

The Shirley Hill Mine was located west of the Old Superior Mine. This was owned by J. Smith Talley, of Terre Haute, president of the Shirley Hill Coal Co. with capital stock of $600,000. Henry A. Hickman, also of Terre Haute, was sec'y. and Treasurer. The company expected to operate 5,933 acres when the mine opened (not opened yet in 1904).

The Summit No. 1 Mine located 13,323 ft. west of South Linton was abandoned, but Summit No. 2 Mine located 16,423 ft. west of South Linton was mining 900 tons daily with machines of No. 4 vein 5 ft. 6 in. thick.

Still, further west of South Linton, some 33,332 ft., was the Atlas No. 1 Mine producing 1,000 tons of No. 4 vein 5 ft. 8 in. thick. The Atlas No. 2 Mine was located about one mile west. Both were operated by the Johson Coal Mining Co.

The Terhune Coal & Mining Co. was owned by D. J. Terhune of Linton, Ind. The Sunflower Coal Co., located west of the Terhune property, was owned by F. M. Dugger of Bloomfield, Ind.

I would be interested in reading any other of these old Pennsylvania Railroad books to learn of other history in the Wabash Valley area. If any one knows of such compendiums please contact the writer.

AP Newsfeatures

Early Mail Routes Ran Along Paths of Buffalo

Community

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

Ts APR 2 1972

Much postal history was learned from the writings of Hon. Henry S. Canthorn of Vincennes who served four years as distributing clerk when his grandfather Elisha Stout was commissioned Post Master.

Canthorn told how his grandfather came to Vincennes by way of the Buffalo Trace, a path which the buffaloes followed from a point at which they crossed the Ohio River near Louisville and which ran in a northwesterly direction to a point where creatures crossed the Wabash River on their way to feed on the prairies in Illinois. The Buffalo Trace crossed the river a little north of Vincennes.

The first mails received at Vincennes in the regular order were brought over this trace and were carried on a pack horse which was led by a man riding post on another.

Canthorn told how in the early days mails went in all directions and the stage which carried them regularly to Terre Haute three times a week, on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Returning they came in on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. The stage line between Vincennes and Terre Haute was operated by a Mr. Emison who also did a good business in the way of passengers.

He remembered well when the E.&T.H. began to run passenger trains. "At first the trains came but a few miles north of Evansville, and there met the stage and would take both mail and passengers and in return give the stage driver the mail pouches and passengers they had brought."

"Week after week the railroad shortened the distance of the stage route until one day the train came into the station at Vincennes when the stage running south was discontinued altogether. The same process was continued until the E.&T.H. had its terminal in Terre Haute. It was the same story with the Ohio & Mississippi Railroad."

DOROTHY J. CLARK

"The railroads coming into this section was the beginning of the end of Vincennes as a distributing office, for with them came the railway post office and shortly after the close of the Civil War this function of the Vincennes Post Office was discontinued."

We hear the term "Star Route" and many do not know what it means. Star Routes were so called because of an asterisk designation to distinguish them from railroads and such in scheme books of the postal clerks.

The first Star Route to cross Clay County crossed Eel River at what was known as Carpenter's Mill. This mill was situated almost two miles west of the town of Poland. There was then only one post office in the county and it was known as Christy's Prairie, being named for William Christy, postmaster.

The carrier had a little wagon, something on the order of an express wagon, and he carried a large tin horn which was blown while he was yet some distance away, so that if Mr. Christy was out on the farm he might be warned to come and select and take out what belonged

Continued On Page 6, Col. 6.

Community Affairs File

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TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA

Dorothy Clark

Continued From Page 4.

to that post office.

The road followed by this carrier ran in a southwesterly direction to a point near where Cory is now, and then due west to Prairieton which was the terminus. This old road has been straightened and changed until there remains only about a half mile of the original road.

Some years later the old Prairieton route was discontinued and a new route established between Terre Haute and Spencer by way of Bowling Green.

Star Routes were the arteries and veins of the post office in a great and growing country. Contractors sublet individual routes to persons at a very low rate per diem in the hope that the passenger service and the carrying of packages might, if possible, pay a good wage.

There has never been a time in the history of Vigo County since the opening of the system here that there has been no such routes. The little towns located some distance from the railroads were supplied by Star Routes.

In 1900 Libertyville received her mail from R.F.D. No. 1, Vermillion, Ill., New Goshen and Tecumseh received mail from St. Mary's in a buggy. Heckland mail was carried about one mile from the station to the post office on foot. Ehrmandale mail was carried by a boy on horseback from Fontanet. He was a typical post rider except he did not have a traditional horn, although he usually rode at a gallop.

Arch Foster had the contract for the Star Route from Terre Haute to Fairbanks in 1901. This route handled more mail than any other in Vigo County. Leaving Terre Haute post office he carried mail for Prairieton, Hutton, Vigo, Prairie Creek, Fairbanks, Staffordshire and Narrows. At Prairieton he was met by the carrier for Hutton and Vigo.

A Star Route left for Pimento each day from Howesville in Clay county passing through Lewis, Soonover and Black Hawk bringing with him the mail he collected. He also returned the same day giving these offices a daily mail. Soon after the Southern Indiana Railroad carried this mail. In October, 1900, the post offices at Bloomtown, Swalls and Watkins were discontinued.

In 1825 mail came in to Terre Haute three times a week from Cincinnati by way of Indianapolis; also from Louisville and Evansville by way of Vincennes. Mail was received from Lafayette twice a week and once from Springfield, Ill.

Mail and passengers were carried in stage coaches over the old National Road, but it is difficult to imagine now the awful state of the road in winter weather. (Note: I have a future series of columns coming soon on the subject of the stage coaches and the old National Road and the tall tales of the drivers).

People who lived in the 1840's saw the pony express carry the mails through their towns, but the puff of the iron horse put a stop to that romantic period of mail delivery. With the coming of the T.H. & Indianapolis and the E. & T.H. railroads, Terre Haute began receiving mails from the railroads and this has continued until the present time when now only trucks, buses and planes bring in mail. Note: The third and last part of this series will be given next Sunday.

AP Newsfeatures

JUL 30 1972

Fifteen Miles a Day Good Time for Wagoners

Community Affairs File

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

The brilliant stage coaches as they whirled along the National Road passed many capacious, high-bowed wagons heavily laden with the manufactures of the east or the raw products of the west. Drawn by six powerful horses, these transports conveyed the freights from and to the various water routes and connections, furnishing the only satisfactory means of inland transportation the country afforded.

Occasionally they came from as far east as the other side of the Alleghenies with goods for local merchants, loading back with whatever freight they could get.

In 1846 two teamsters from Hagerstown, Maryland. then the western terminus of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, arrived here after a two-month's trip, with merchandise for a local consignee. Six dollars was the rate they received per hundred pounds, and 8,000 pounds or "eighty hundred" as the old wagoners put it, made a load. With a wagon carrying that much weight, an average speed of 15 miles a day was possible.

A set of bells, not like sleigh bells but cone-shaped and attached to iron arches were sprung over the harness of all the horses except the near-wheeler. Bell teams attracted much admiration as the horses moved majestically along to the jingling accompaniment of the various-toned bells.

The men who made a business of hauling were a hardy, energetic class but seldom total abstainers. On the road they stopped over night at the taverns, tethering their horses in the wagon yards, rarely stabling them, but protecting them with blankets in winter. In the evening when the halt was made the feed troughs suspended in the front and rear of the wagons were taken down and fastened on the tongue. The horses were then tied there on a side and left so until morning.

DOROTHY J. CLARK

The wagoners all carried their own straw tick beds rolled up in the fore part of the wagon and when it was time to retire, they spread them in a semi-circle before the big bar room fire. These pike boys were fond of such amusements as enlivened the road. A fiddle in the hands of one of their number or some musically inclined landlord served to pass long evenings and gave opportunity for a "hoe down." Country dances, husking bees or spelling matches in the vicinity were also unfailing attractions. Upon the occasion of such local entertainments, perchance mine host had a buxom daughter who lacked escort, and a pleasant time was had by all.

Wagoner's Welcome

Wagoners were welcome guests at all country festivities and frequently started out

Continued On Page 7, Col. 1.

Dorothy Clark

Continued From Page 4.

with their teams after dancing all night.

During the late 1840's the wagons of prospective settlers were so numerous along the National Road between Indianapolis and Terre Haute that they were constantly in sight of each other. At night their camp fires beside the streams lighted up the crossings and by day the army of home seekers pushed on west.

The outward apperance of a tavern on the old pike was no indication of its popularity. Many unassuming hewn-log houses had enviable reputations and the goodwill of the public. Far more pretentious taverns were often deserted.

First and most famous of all Terre Haute's early taverns was the old Eagle and Lion that stood on the southeast corner of First and Main streets. It was opened to the public on July 4, 1817. This was a two-story building of hewn logs with a porch that extended along the front. The larger downstairs rooms easily accomodated early political and social gatherings. To the first structure was later added a frame addition and the whole building clapboarded.

When Henry Clay, one of the powerful promoters of the National Road, honored Terre Haute with a visit in 1831, a delegation of citizens met him several miles beyond the village and escorted him to the Eagle and Lion while the town cannon roared a welcome.

Later the old tavern became the stage house and from here radiated all the news. The Eagle and Lion passed through numerous hands and changed its name twice. The first proprietor was the builder Henry Redford, next it was kept by Robert Harrison; and then by Captain Wasson, a sailor who had drifted in-

Community Affairs File

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TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA

land. During 1840 and 1841 the house was in the hands of a Frenchman named Levy.

The old signboard showing the American eagle attacking the British lion, had been redecorated and bore the picture of an Indian with upraised bow when William Mcadden became proprietor about 1842. Under his management the Indian Hotel flourished, but lost its standing after his management was over. John Downey called the tavern the Pig and Whistle in 1849 and 1850. After he gave it up, it continued under various manager as a second-class hotel until it was demolished in 1857.

One of its principal competitors was the Light Horse tavern, a large frame house on the northeast corner of Third and Main streets. On its sign board was painted a rearing war horse, fully caparisoned.

With the increase of travel the landloard's business thrived and many new establishments sprang up. Matthew Stewart kept a hotel on North Second Street (last remaining part of this building was demolished in 1970.) This was the stage house in 1847. The office of the stage company was in a small brick building directly opposite.

At Third and Mulberry streets Colonel Baird, a veteran of the War of 1812, kept the Mansion House.

The Broadway House kept by Jas. Haynes was on the corner of Third and Cherry streets. Johnny Burton, an Englishman, kept a popular place at the northeast corner of Fifth and Cherry (where the Filbeck Hotel was later and is now another parking lot.)

On the site of the Terre Haute House, Chauncy Rose built in 1838 the Prarie House. On the east side of Third street just south of Ohio street stood the old Early House.

The wayfarer could find shelter at almost any house along the National Road and at reasonable rates. The regular charge for supper, bed and breakfast for a man and his horse was 75 cents. Liquid refreshments were equally cheap. Whiskey sold for 12 and ½ cents a pint and every house on the road had a little bar. The retail price was 3 cents a drink except at stage houses where it was 5 cents.

The current coin of the road was the big copper cent, the "fippenny bit" Spanish value 6 and ¼ cents, the "levy" Spanish value 12 and ½ cents, the quarter, half dollar and dollar. Mexican and Spanish milled dollar were more common than those of United States coinage.

The whistle of the locomotive sounded the kneil of the stage coach and the wagon, and as lines of rails stretched across the country the stages were relegated to the back districts. One by one the old taverns were abandoned and the people along the way who had depended on the traveler turned to their lands for support. Many of the villages found themselves deserted. The Terre Haute and Richmond Railroad was completed in 1852 and in that year the line of coaches was taken off.

A year later some trouble with this railroad about mail contracts occurred and for a few short months the stages again ran between Terre Haute and Indianapolis.

Until the Terre Haute and Alton Railroad was built the mails were carried by coach to St. Louis and after the withdrawal of this line, the ones running north and south remained in service some longer.

History continues to repeat itself, but people never seem to learn this fact. Now the traffic is on the new Interstate 70, and old U.S. 40 is a pleasure to drive on again without so many trucks and buses. Motels and eating places that depend on the travelers for their revenue have folded up and gone out of business. Just as the times changed and the people with them when the railroads put the old National Road in the background.

Ts SEP 17 1972

Interurban Short Lived Mode of Transportation

Community Affairs File

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

The Interurban was the shortest lived mode of transportation devised by man. Born in the early nineties, it began a feverish expansion in the early part of the present century, reached its zenith between 1914-1920, and passed completely from the scene in the early forties.

During the heyday of this great electric railway system, more than 18,000 miles of track were in operation in our country. Indiana was in the lead with 2,000 miles of trackage. Then following in this order were Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, Pennsylvania, New York, California, Massachusetts and Texas.

The first true Interurban Electric Line began service February, 1893, with an 18-mile line between Portland and Oregon City, Oregon. A 20-mile line between Sandusky, Milan and Norwalk was started in Ohio. In 1895, service began on the Akron, Bedford and Cleveland line, better known as the A.B.C. Line.

By 1915 thousands of excited people withdrew savings to invest in proposed interurban lines with high hopes of getting on the gravy train.

At first the equipment was of wooden construction, but steel cars made their first appearance about 1910. The more prosperous lines put on parlor cars, buffet cars, and lounge cars — some with porter service. A few lines, such as Indianapolis-Louisville Line and the Peoria-St. Louis Line, operated Interurban sleepers, with service equal to Pullman's.

Electric railway officials had their private cars that were the ultimate in luxury. Mr. Henry E. Huntington, president of the Pacific Electric Railway, built the "Alahama" in 1905. She was 63 ft. long, weighed 51 tons, and could be locomotive - drawn like other private cars. When she reached home tracks, motor gears were connected, trolley raised, and four 200-H.P. motors could take her at speeds over 90 miles per hour. She had a dining room that could accomodate ten guests. Her carved mahogany furniture, silken drapes, and wood-burning fireplace made traveling de luxe.

DOROTHY J. CLARK

During the Depression of the thirities, the interurban lines were abandoned as fast as they had appeared. Greatest contributing factors for the rapid abandonment and final demise of the interurbans were the fast development of state highway systems with federal grants for hard surfacing, and a gasoline tax that was specifically earmarked for highway improvement. With these improved highways available to the public, it was only natural that the use of private automobiles should increase rapidly from year to year. The number of motor vehicles used today has doubled the number used in the early forties when the interurban gave up.

Name Stuck

Credit for coining the word "Interurban" goes to a Hoosier, Charles L. Henry. A lawyer and Indiana congress-

Continued On Page 5, Col. 1.

Ts SEP 17 1972

Dorothy Clark

Continued From Page 4.

man from the Old 8th District, he became interested in electric railway transportation early in life.

He first used the word while furthering his ideas at the Chicago World's Fair of 1893. The name stuck and is still used to describe electrically driven motor cars that operate on steel rails between cities. Active in furthering the cause of interurbans in Indiana, he devoted his life to this industry and was referred to as the "Father of Electric Interurban Travel."

Indiana, "Empire State of the Interurban," had twelve major lnes centered in Indianapolis. Each line ran an average of fiteen cars per day arriving and departing. This meant thirty scheduled runs each, or almost 360 per day, a very conservative figure. From 1910 to 1920 an average of 400 trains daily averaged 35 fares on each run built a terminal to accommodate this continuous flow of humanity.

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TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA

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Hugh J. McGowan, president of Indianapolis Street Railways, fathered the idea of a terminal construction at a cost of over a million dollars. Dedicated Sept. 12, 1904, the terminal was nine stories high, 164 ft. by 68 ft., and housed many electric railway company offices.

It was situated on West Market Street, one block from a movement of 14,000 people. Indianapolis was the Interurban capitol of the world and with a huge sky light and 15 arc lamps for night illumination.

The first interurban line in Indiana opened in 1892 between Indianapolis and suburban Broadripple, a run of about eight miles. By 1915 at least 174 cities and towns lay on main line traction routes.

The present bus station on Wabash Avenue between Eighth and Ninth streets was the former site of the Interurban Terminal. The arcade style building had shops in the open passageway between Wabash Avenue and the waiting station in the rear.

From Terre Haute there were interurbans to Indianapolis, Sullivan, Clinton, and Paris, Illinois. The line to Paris opened in the fall of 1907. The last interurban car made its final trip to Indianapolis Jan. 10, 1941. The last electric street car in Terre Haute made its final run on June 3, 1939.

"Time goes on you say. Ah, no, alas time stays, we go."—Austin Dobson.

When Streetcars Came, Street Names Changed

Community Affairs File

To DEC

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

Public transportation in the City of Terre Haute was provided for by the Common Council in 1866 when they authorized John H. Barr, President of the Terre Haute Street Railway Company, to lay tracks in the city streets.

The company was authorized to lay a single or double track on the following streets: Wabash, Ohio, Cherry, Walnut, Mulberry, Poplar, Eagle, Swan, Chestnut, Oak, Lafayette Road, and north and south streets from First to Tenth streets. They were allowed to lay the above-named tracks plus any necessary turn-outs for side-tracks and switches.

The railway cars and carriages to be used on these tracks were operated by animal power only, and could not connect with any other railway on which any other power was used. The street railway was to be used for no other purpose than to transport passengers and their ordinary baggage.

The tracks were not to be elevated above street level so as not to interfere with the passage of wagons, carriages, etc., along or across the track at any point. All tracks were to be of uniform gauge, not exceeding five feet in width, laid in the center of the streets only.

The first streetcars were not allowed to go more than six miles an hour. While the cars were turning corners from one street to another the horses or mules were not driven faster than a walk. A distance of 200 feet had to be kept between cars running in the same direction.

DOROTHY J. CLARK

There were all sorts of safety rules including "conductors shall not allow ladies or children to enter the cars while in motion," and "cars, after sunset, shall be provided with signal lights." A fine up to fifty dollars was levied on anyone convicted of hindering or stopping a street car after the driver or conductor had rung the warning car bell.

By the first day of October, 1868, the company was obligated to have a street car line in operation from the corner of First and Wabash to the Passenger Depot on Chestnut street. The charter was granted for a thirty-year period and for four years the company was exempt from city taxes. The fare was set at ten cents on any one line in the city.

On July 7, 1868, the Common Council passed an ordinance "prohibiting all persons, not in good faith intending to use them as a conveyance, from jumping on Horse Cars in the city, while the same are in motion." There was a fine not to exceed $25 for this offense.

At the same session of the Council a similar ordinance was passed relating to railroad trains within the city limits while in motion. This violation carried a $50 fine.

Many ordinances adopted by the Common Council pertained to streets and public transportation. They found it necessary to regulate the use of stagecoaches, hacks, drays and other vehicles for transportation of passengers,

Dorothy Clark

Continued From Page 4.

To DEC

freight or other articles to and from points within the city for hire or pay. They tried to prevent "immoderate riding or driving."

Traffic hazards over a century ago included the "running at large of cattle, horses, swine, folws, and other animals." The Council tried to restrain and prohibit this practice.

They found it necessary to regulate the speed of horses, carriages, locomotives, etc. A tax was established on omnibuses by the 1873 Acts.

The planting, maintaining, and protection of shade trees along the streets and in public grounds was their responsibility in 1865. They also compelled the owners of lots bordering on those streets and public grounds to do the same. They could specify what kind of tree and how it was to be planted!

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In 1871 the Council passed an ordinance changing the name of some streets and naming others. The street running east and west from the south line of the Female College grounds was named College street. Sheets street became Crawford.

Wabash street was changed to Main street. The street known as Spruce and Tyler was renamed Spruce from the river to 13th. Pine was renamed Tippecanoe. The first street north of Locust was named Early; the second became Third Ave.; the third became Mack; the fourth became Sixth Ave.; the fifth became Seventh Ave.; and the sixth became Eighth Ave.

Market street was renamed Third street. The street between Sixth and Seventh was changed to Center. The street running north and south recorded as Eighth was changed to Seventh. The name of the first street east of the Terre Haute House, recorded as Ninth, was changed to Eighth. The street recorded as Tenth was changed to Ninth. Broad street became Tenth street.

Elk became Eleventh; Fawn became Twelfth; Prairie became Thirteenth. The street between Thirteenth and Fourteenth was called Centre Ave.

The street running north and south, west of Jewett's third subdivision, and east of Jewett's first subdivision, was named Fourteenth street. The next street east became Fifteenth; the next one east became Sixteenth; and the third street east became Seventeenth street.

Cherry street was changed to Mulberry; Mulberry to Eagle; and Eagle street became Chestnut. In researching locations before and after 1871, the above changes become very important to remember.

In 1873 the Philadelphia system of numbering houses was adopted in Terre Haute. Using Water street as a base for east and west streets, the odd numbers were on the right hand side and even numbers on the left hand side. With Main street as base for north and south streets, odd numbers were on the west, even numbers on the east side of streets south of Main, while odd numbers were on the east, even numbers on the west sides of the streets north of Main.

The growing pains of Terre Haute over a century ago were evident in the streets and street cars and their problems even as they are today.

"Whistle Stops" Not a Joke In Days of Interurbans

Community Affairs File

Ts SEP 22 1974

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

To many hundreds of the elite patrons of the interurban line, "whistle stops" were a joke and merely something to liven conservation at parties, but to thousands they meant home.

The first interurban system in our area really did not touch Terre Haute as it ran only from Harmony to Cottage Hill, one-half west of Brazil. There is very little history of that line to be found, but it was in existence several years before the line built from Terre Haute reached Cottage Hill and reconstructed the old line for the use of the new system.

This was the first interurban line out of Terre Haute and must have been completed by 1900. It was part of the system founded here by Stone and Webster, but in 1903 work was begun on a line to reach Clinton. Following this came a line projected to reach Paris and a separate corporation known as The Terre Haute and Western Railroad covered that portion of the line from the state line to Paris.

During the construction of this latter line a promoter with eastern connections procured a franchise from the City Council to build a line to Sullivan. This promoter went east to get the financial support necessary for his venture. In his absence the Stone and Webster organization diverted all shipments of poles, wire, rails, ties, and other material necessary and had them shipped to points on the Evansville and Terre Haute Railroad which paralleled the proposed route to Sullivan.

DOROTHY J. CLARK

There was nothing in these shipments to connect them with the Stone and Webster outfit, and work which was started at once was apparently a continuation of the promoter's work.

When this individual had secured the necessary backing and returned to Terre Haute he was more than mildly astonished to find a great deal of work done that he had expected to do with his organization. He then abandoned his project and it was completed to Sullivan as a part of Stone and Webster system. Work was then resumed on the Paris line.

In the meantime, the Brazil line had been rebuilt and became the start of the line which eventually reached Indianapolis. There through a great system of interurban lines it became possible for one to reach New England points by trolley, although it was never explained why anyone would be eccentric enough to attempt such a tour.

With the organization of the Terre Haute, Indianapolis and Eastern Traction Company, it was possible to reach a great deal of Indiana and a few points outside the state. This system radiated from Indianapolis and was divided into six divisions called the Northwestern, Eastern, Martinsville, Danville, Brazil and Terre Haute Divisions.

The Northwestern Division included lines to Lafayette and Crawfordsville. The Eastern Division included lines to Richmond and New

Continued On Page 5, Col. 2.

Dorothy Clark

Continued From Page 4.

Ts SEP 22 1974

Castle. The Martinsville Division reached only to Martinsville, and the Danville Division terminated at Danville.

The Brazil Division connected with the Terre Haute Division which included Clinton, Paris and Sullivan.

In the Terre Haute system, fares were on a zone system which started with the Brazil line. The franchise of this line granted by the Vigo County Commissioners provided that the fare between Terre Haute and Brazil should not exceed 15 cents for one way or 25 cents the round trip. However, in practice one paid 20 cents because the company required an additional five cents from the zone limit to any point inside either city. Then transfers were given to ride city lines, but the city lines did not give transfers were given to ride city lines, but the city lines did not give transfers for the interurbans. In later days the minimum fare was fixed at 10 cents for any distance and eventually a passenger tariff fixed the fare on a mileage basis.

In many instances the motorman would stop almost anywhere that the passenger desired, but these points became so frequent that regular stops usually known by number were established at points a mile or so apart and were given a different "stop" number. However, many of these stops were given names that bewildered the stranger who looked out and saw nothing, in many cases not even a building, where he assumed there was at least a crossroads store. Some of these names might indicate a nearby land owner or almost any other source. For instance, on the Terre Haute system was Allendale. Ferguson Crossing on the Paris line was named for the family of that name who lived on the adjacent hill and which later became Stop Four.

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Carl Avenue, a street in a subdivision; Numa, a point on the Wabash and Erie Canal north of Terre Haute, and Turman's Creek, an historic spot in Sullivan County.

Almost any community of any size on this widespread system, no matter what the name, was a station though it seldom had a ticket office and all freight was prepaid. The numerous unnamed stops, which in many cases were only road crossings, were actually "whistle stops," where one-half mile away the motorman sounded his air chime, the successor of the steam whistle, and people desiring to board the car stood at the side of the track and waved their hand in the daytime or burned a newspaper torch at night to attract his attention.

Newcomers to the Terre Haute area live here some time before they find out what Stop 16 might signify on the old Lafayette Road. Old timers know where the interurban stops used to be, but newcomers are usually curious about these mysterious stops when the convenient interurban cars handled public transportation better than it's been handled in the past 33 years since its demise.

Interurbans Had Short, Intense Life In Indiana

Is SEP 28 1975

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

Interurban is a word coined in 1893 by Charles L. Henry of Anderson, a lawyer and electric rail pioneer, to describe electric railways between towns.

The electric motor and its reliable horsepower put the oat-eating variety out of business on street railway systems in Hoosier towns in the late 1880s and '90s.

Interurbans offered rural and small town residents a dependable and economical link to the larger cities and interurbans caught on like a prairie fire. Companies were hastily organized all over the state of Indiana and construction was feverish. By the end of 1900, nearly 1,000 interurban cars ran on 678 miles of track. Fourteen years later, over 1,600 cars were shuttled about the state on 2,300 miles of trackage as Indiana vied with Ohio in total interurban trackage.

By World War I, the building boom was about over and 67 of the state's 92 counties boasted some interurban services. Only Bedford, Bloomington and Bicknell, among towns over 5,000, had none.

Indianapolis became the center of interurban operations where 400 runs a day ended or began in the huge million dollar terminal with 13 different lines carrying more than five and a half million passengers in and out of the capital in 1910. Passenger load crested at seven million by 1914.

Passengers rode the interurbans for fun, shopping and commuting or business. They rode in comfort at 70 miles per hour as far north as Elkhart, south to Louisville, west to Terre Haute, and east to Richmond and Union City.

They rode the Honey Bee Line, the Winona Flyer, the Muncie Meteor, the Buckeye Special, the Tecumseh Arrow, the Dixie Flyer and many more fast-moving electrics.

The Dixie Flyer and The Hoosier Flyer were most popular as the cars traveled the 117 miles in comfort with meals served and all-night sleeper cars were inaugurated which spent most of the night on sidings so passengers could roll into Louisville or Indianapolis at 9 a.m. Despite such attractions, however, passenger business declined and new emphasis was placed on interurban freight hauling and livestock pickup service. Many towns had pens near the track for loading and unloading of stock for the markets.

By 1930, it was clear that the interurban era was nearing its end. Over-capitalization and high fixed charges were too much for dwindling revenues and small lines foled like flies until today all that's left of Indiana's interurban interlude is an occasional outcropping of weed-choked roadbed and an endless collection of memories. The interurban did not last very long, but while it lasted, the interurban boom was one of the most exciting, most colorful and most costly chapters in Hoosier history.

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According to Harry H. "Red" Howell, Plainfield, Ind., a locomotive engineer for Penn Central Railroad, and a confirmed railway "buff," the "electrics" in Terre Haute were named after the different schools, such as The Wiley, which was the "hotiest," and ran races on its run to Sullivan with steam trains and was numbered 122; and the 110 was called Indiana State Normal and ran to Clinton. These two cars were the only ones which were not controlled in the center of the car; all others were controlled from the center of the car.

Other innovations were the double deckers which carried picnickers in Terre Haute to Gollett Park. One of the famous services was the 12-car coal train which hauled coal from the Binkley mine east of Terre Haute for Terre Haute use.

Mr. Howell is constantly reminded of the old T.H.I&E. Traction Company's passenger service line between Terre Haute and Paris, Ill., as he travels along its former route on his run to East St. Louis. This line ceased operation by court order at midnight Jan. 25,

From a point near St. Mary's Village to the Clear Creek location, he can see many culverts, bridge abutments, roadbed, and, until a few years ago, some of the trolley wire arms on the poles just west of Vermillion, Ill. One of the few buildings standing is the old depot and sub-station in the northern section of Vermillion, Ill. The old red brick building housed the sub-station to boost power for the cars and on each side of the cupola, for the agent's office, was a passenger waiting room and freight room.

Until the late 1930s, all interurbans using the Terre Haute Terminal were two-man cars and had both motorman and conductor. The motorman was described as "a proud looking fellow wearing blue and white striped overalls and overall jacket to match. He wore a stiff starched white cap or one the smae color as his overalls. The railroad standard watch and chain was kept in his

over

bib pockets. The conductor dressed in blue serge suit uniforms complete with vest, stiff-billed caps and always a spic and span white shirt and starched collar. Most of them carried a railroad watch in their vest pocket attached to a shing gold chain and fob. The lapel of each and every uniform sported a brightly enameled insignia pin inprinted with the T.H.I&E. emblem.

Other types of equipment on the traction lines included work cars or line cars which carried all repair equipment needed to aid a broken down car or break in the wires. City lines also had sweeper cars which swept the tracks clean when snow or storm debris would interfere with proper operations. There were also snow plows and weed-burning equipment needed to keep the tracks clear.

Mr. Howell's extensive collection includes photographs of former employees and the cars they operated, depots, timetables, maps, switch locks and keys, lanterns, unifrom insignia, old rule books, and scale models of some of the equipment.

Community Affairs File

Historically Speaking

Streets

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

Ts JUL 25 1976

One hundred years ago, Terre Haute streets were known by very different names than they are now. For instance, Poplar street east of the railroad was known as the Bloomington Road.

Canal Street ran from the Wabash river east to Eighth street which was the sixth street north of Main. Center Avenue was a north and south street, crossing Main between 13th and 14th streets.

Donnelly street ran from 14th to 15th between Crawford and Deming. This became 13 ½ St.

Dowling street ran from Fifth west to the Wabash river, and was the first street north of Locust, now First Ave. Then there was First Avenue which ran from Thirteenth east, and was the first street north of Locust. So, it appears this one street has three sections and three names in 1876.

The Evansville & Crawfordsville Railroad ran from the corner of Tenth and Chestnut streets, north and south. This is now the C.& E.I Railroad.

What was known a century ago as the Evansville Road ran from the corner of First and Grover, southwest, the Prairieton Road. And Grover, now called Seabury, ran from First to Third, the second street south of Moffatt. Where was Moffatt? It is now Washington Avenue, the seventh street south of Oak, from First street east.

Franklin Avenue ran from 14th to 15th, the sixth street south of Poplar, but is not now in existence because of the railroad.

Gookins street, now called Franklin, ran from First street east, the sixth street south of Oak.

Gulick street, now Putnam, ran from Third east, the first street south of Moffatt.

High street ran from Deming street south, between 14th and 15th streets. It became Gilbert Avenue.

Hulman street ran from the Wabash river east, forming the southern boundary of the city in 1876.

The Indianapolis & St. Louis Railroad, later the Big Four Railroad, ran from the corner of Sixth and Tippecanoe, east and west.

Lafayette Street, now Lafayette Avenue, ran from the corner of Third and Linton in a northeasterly direction, becoming the Lafayette Road at the corner of Scott and Lafayette, and continuing in a northeasterly direction.

Linton Street ran from the Wabash river east to Seventh Street, the fifth street north of Main, and later called Sycamore street.

Scott Street ran from the Wabash river east, forming the northern boundary of the city in 1876. It is now Eighth Ave.

Mack Street ran from Sixth east to 13th, the third street north of Locust, now Fourth Ave.

Ross Street ran from First to Third, the first street north of Chestnut. There was also a Ross street 100 years ago that ran from 14th to 15th, the first street south of Deming.

The St. Louis, Vandalia, Terre Haute & Indianapolis Railroad ran from the corner of Tenth and Chestnut, east and west. This is now the Penn-Central Railroad.

Providence Street was the old name for Sixth Avenue, east of 13th St.

Sheets Street, now Crawford, ran from First east to Third, the second street south of Oak.

The Terre Haute & Cincinnati Railroad, later the Big Four, ran from the corner of First and Main south.

Tyler Street ran from the Wabash river east to 13th, the seventh street north of Main. This is now Spruce street which continues on east from Seventh.

Vine Street, now Cruft, ran from First street east, and was the fifth street south of Oak street.

In 1876, Washington Avenue ran from Seventh east, the ninth street south of Main.

Some of the early street signs we had in early Terre Haute included the Golden Coffee Pot which hung over the entrance of Smith & Graff, the manufacturers of copper, tin and sheet iron, located on Second street between Wabash and Sycamore. This establishment was owned by Nicholas Smith, of Vincennes, and Jacob K. Graff, of Terre Haute.

A huge anvil sign hung over the store of J. Cook & Company Hardware store. Another hardware store of S. H. Potter on the east side of the public square was marked with a sign of an old padlock.

Anyone having knowledge of former street signs is invited to contact the writer.

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Terre Haute's city government was run from council chambers located on the south side of Ohio, between Third and Fourth, in 1876. James B. Edmunds was mayor; John B. Tolbert, clerk; John Paddock, treasurer, and John G. Williams, city attorney. The town marshal was Fred Schmidt.

Jackson Stepp served as assessor; Richard Strout, engineer; C. P. Voorhees, street commissioner; Stephen Mahoney, fire chief; George W. Shewmaker, police chief, and F. Fischer, township trustee.

Times were apparently no different 100 years ago than they are now with the juvenile deportment problems. According to the newspapers of that day, our city badly needed "a work house, especially for juvenile rings."

The article went on to report that "the worst juvenile monstrosity in Terre Haute is a little girl who swears ably in three languages."

—Historically Speaking—

By Dorothy Clark

History of bridgemaking traced for Vigo County

Ts OCT 16 1977

Ts OCT 16 1977

Community Affairs File

Clark, Dorothy

The earliest settlements in Vigo County were along the Wabash River or upon the banks of the creeks that flowed into the Wabash, because waterways were the only routes of travel.

The pioneer settlements on Honey Creek and Prairie Creek, known later as Prairieton and Middletown, were both on or near the trail followed by William Henry Harrison on his way to Tippecanoe, a route later called "Army Road."

This was the first of Vigo County's roads used by those traveling from Vincennes to Fort Harrison and on to the Indian village at the mouth of the Tippecanoe River. Now we know it as the Prairieton Road or Lafayette Road.

After Vigo County was established, one of the first acts of the county commissioners was to make plans and let contracts for bridges over the streams where Harrison's army had been compelled to ford or ferry.

The first of these bridges were primitive culverts. The first one of any size was the one over Honey Creek on the Prairieton Road built in 1821 by Greene and Mallory. It cost $275.

In 1822 a bridge was built over Otter Creek by Robert Graham for about $300. These were followed by covered bridges.

There is an old saying, "If you'd have your timbers lay, hew them out in March or May." Also, "When the moon is new to full, timber fibers warp and pull." Bridges were covered for the same reason women wore petticoats — to protect their underpinnings.

Two types of covered bridges were built in this area depending on the supply of yellow poplar or tulip poplar trees. The old covered bridge over the Wabash River at Terre Haute was five spans of 125 feet each and a drawspan. This was built in 1840 at the foot of Ohio Street. The covered bridge at the foot of Wabash Avenue was built at the end of the Civil War and remained until the present bridge was built in 1905.

Six different truss designs have been used in covered timber bridges in Indiana. These were the Burr, Howe, Post, Smith, Queen-Post, and Childs. The first five are still represented in the state. The last remaining Childs truss was removed in 1961.

Theodore Burr, a son of a mill builder, was born in Torrington, Conn., in 1771. He began to design long-span, all-wooden bridges in 1798, and erected many fine bridges from Maine to Maryland. Burr developed the idea of combining the trusses with large arches supported a few feet below the bridge floor by the abutments and piers.

Some historians believe Burr's design the most important of all early designs for long-span bridges. The large arches combined with trusses were used to develop the long spans for steel bridges such as the famous Eads bridge over the Mississippi River at St.Louis, the world's largest freight bridge.

Burr's large arch principle is used today to support roofs and ceilings in buildings where a large, clear floor space is wanted. After Burr's death in 1822, other builders used his design in hundreds of bridges in various states including Indiana.

The Indiana State Board for Internal Improvements in 1838 adopted Burr's design for all the longer spans on roads built by the state because they found it the most permanent type of construction.

Indiana's well-known builders, Britton, Daniels and the Kennedys, favored the Burr design and used it in nearly all their bridges. Kennedy omitted the arch in some small bridges where the span was less than 80 or 85 feet.

In covered bridge construction, the long horizontal beams are known as chords, fabricated by joining timbers lengthwise to scarf joints to make strings as long as the spans required. Two or more such strings formed a chord. The bottom chords carry the roadway floor, while the top chords carry the roof.

In the Burr truss, only the diagonals which lean toward the center line of the span were used. They are the forward struts. The two nearest the center line meet at the vertical member to form the typical king post. In Burr's earliest design for large bridges, he

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used both diagonal struts. Those that lean toward the ends of the span are called trailing struts. Both diagonals were used in the Howe truss. Treenails or wooden dowels had to be used for fastenings in all heavy timber construction before iron was available.

Iron making in the United States began at Saugus, Mass., in 1645, but iron rods were not in production before the 1830s. Production was increased about 1838 to supply the railroads. Threaded bolts were developed about the same time, however they were not easily obtainable for bridge work. Blacksmiths formed holes near the ends of rods and made keys to tighten them.

Next week's column will continue the local bridge story...

—Historically Speaking—

By Dorothy Clark

Ts OCT 2 3 1977 Community Affairs File

Some additional thoughts about the early bridges

Last week's column told of the earliest bridges in Vigo county and the beginnings of covered bridges in this county — the Burr design which was approved by the Indiana State Board of Internal Improvements in 1838 and the change brought about in timber construction with the development of iron-making and the use of bolts in bridge work.

From early Vigo County Commissioner's record books I learned that in 1844 Cyrus W. Bishop was paid one dollar as road viewer in Riley Township.

The same year the country appropriated $60 "to build a bridge upon the county road across Honey Creek between Alexander Beard's and Johnson Mewhinney's and that J. Mewhinney was appointed to let said contracts and advertise letting of same."

Cyrus W. Bishop and his brother-in-law, Jonas Seely (for whom Seelyville is named) came to Terre Haute in the early 1830s from Portland county, New York.

They worked as wagon-makers until 1841, according to local newspaper advertisements.

Government land was selling for two dollars an acre, so Bishop bought 260 acres two miles west of Riley and half a mile from the former covered bridge site on Honey Creek.

Here he built a dam and sawmill.

The creek banks were 15 feet high, and it was a simple matter to fell huge poplar trees and roll the logs down the gulley to the saw mill. He built two houses, a school house and shipped much lumber on the Wabash and Erie Canal.

The historic Irishman's covered bridge is described as a Modified Howe, a pony-truss version of Burr with Queen Post to which new web members have been added in recent years.

The odd type is probably due to having been built by local men with their own notions of bridge design.

In September, 1845, "Johnson Mewhinney was allowed eleven dollars for superintending the building of a bridge across Honey Creek between Mewhinney's and Beard's."

A short time later, $15 was appropriated to purchase planks to cover the bridge in the district where John Hess was superintendent in Riley Township.

In 1850 John Hess was allowed $50 as part payment for bridge repairs near Erisman's and Mewhinney's.

Adolphus Erisman had purchased the farm of Alexander Beard.

Then in 1851, John Hess was paid $24.18, the balance due for building the bridge, and due to Hoosier dialect, Erisman's Bridge became Irishman's Bridge... and the man was Swiss, not Irish!

Shortly before work on the bridge was completed, when only the floor, upper frame work and roof had been finished, a long siege of rainy weather set in.

When the weather cleared, the workmen returned, and much to their surprise found a carpet hung at the end of the bridge and a family in a covered wagon camped there.

The young mother had just given birth to a baby in the shelter of the structure while seeking protection from the bad weather.

The workmen gallantly left the little family in peace until they were able to move on, and the sawing and hammering could be done to finish the bridge.

To my knowledge, there is no other bridge in the country that can equal this unique happening.

When this bridge was built in 1845, 132 years ago, there were end supports only.

The middle pier was added after 1900 when automobiles began using it. The road was called the Ferree Road. The original piers were cut or hewn stone, the center pier was of poured concrete.

The bridge was 18 feet wide, 80 feet long, with poplar boards on the sides and oak planks on the floor.

The interesting thing about Irishman's bridge occurred in the 1890s when heavy rains caused this township road to be under water.

Water ran level from hilltop to hilltop.

Bishop's grandson remembered swimming his horse across the wide expanse of water to reach his home. This was especially dangerous because of the swift current which left the south side of the bridge.

In 1917 the temporary bridge on Indiana 46, the old Riley Road, washed out, and the so-called, up-to-date concrete bridge a mile above Riley also washed out. It was necessary to detour back around to cross over the old covered bridge which was slated for demolition and had been condemned.

As it was the only bridge Riley residents could use to get to Terre Haute because of the washout of the temporary bridge on the Lockport Road and the damage to the new bridge on the Canal Road, the county officials reconsidered their plans.

Heavy farm machinery, more traffic, vandalism and motorcycle gangs, became such a problem for the sheriff's men and bridge conservationists that the Vigo County Historical Society and the Covered Bridge Council of Girl Scouts started a fund drive to move the historic bridge to Fowler Park.

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Many months and a lot of effort on the part of many people was needed to raise the necessary six thousand dollars, but in the fall of 1971 this engineering feat was accomplished.

It was felt that a bridge that had served the community for a century and a quarter deserved to be retired with dignity. Plastered with signs, posters, warning concerning speed, our bridge bore a cross-section of Hoosier life.

In addition to the farmer, his family, his stock, and the community's traffic, there was a parade of emigrants, traveling peddlers, minstrels, gypsies, circuses, preachers and vagabonds through the dark romantic tunnel. Many courting couples remember Irishman's bridge with a sigh.

It has been said that in all the category of sound, there's no melody quite so nostalgic as the clippity-clop of horses' hooves echoing through the cool darkness of a covered bridge.

How fortunate are those who can recall this sound. Those of us whose memories begin after "horse and buggy days" can only imagine it.

Postal Service (T.H.)

'When mail arrived daily by two stagecoach

Ts FEB 17 1980

Historically Speaking

By Dorothy Clark

Last week's column began the history of the local Post Office from 1817 through 1842. This is the conclusion of the post office locations and the postmasters.

In 1847 Stephen G. Dodge was postmaster of Terre Haute, when mail arrived daily by two stage coach lines from St. Louis and Indianapolis; tri-weekly from Springfield, Vincennes and Covington; twice a week from Crawfordsville and Bloomington; weekly from Bedford and Carlisle. This made 27 post stages arriving in Terre Haute each week.

A typical letter of 1847 would be four sheets of paper folded in such a manner as to make its own envelope, sealed by a red wax wafer, postage "10" written in ink by the postmaster, from New York to Illinois. The four pages were closely written except a blank space across the middle of the fourth page so that when it was folded it would be on the outside to receive the address. Along with the making of quill pens, one of the arts of the graceful correspondent of pioneer times was the art of folding letters. No postage stamps were used.

As a reward for nominating Henry Clay for president at the Whig Convention in Baltimore, James T. Moffatt was apointed postmaster of Terre Haute in 1849. Preston Hussey became his assistant in 1850, and remained until 1852. At this time the office had four-horse coach mail service from the east, west and south six times a week, a tri-weekly hack line to Crawfordsville, and a weekly mail southeast.

J.O. Jones Named

On May 6, 1853, Joseph O. Jones was appointed postmaster by Pres. Pierce to succeed Moffatt. He held the office until Feb.23, 1854, and was then commissioned by Pierce four years more. At the beginning of the Fremont campaign of 1856, he openly severed his connection with the Democrat party, which effectively ended his official career.

When he succeeded Judge Moffatt, the post office was in a one-story frame building on the south side of Main Street, a few doors east of Fourth. Chauncey Warren then built the three-story brick on Fourth south of the Warren Block, corner of Fourth and Main, and there the office remained until Dr. Read moved it to Sixth Street.

Jones was again appointed by Pres. Lincoln, and re-appointed at the end of four years, but not confirmed before the assassination. However, he was commissioned and served until the summer of 1866.

Following an interim of 15 years, he again became postmaster under Pres. Garfield. It is interesting to note he was postmaster under two martyred presidents. He served his full term during Arthur's administration, and was finally relieved of official cares in June, 1885, nearly 46 years from the date of his first appointment.

Filbeck Appointed

In February, 1871, the new post office on South Sixth Street was being built. In March, a violent windstorm damaged the new building and blew the roof off the old one, scattering bricks and lumber all over the city.

In 1873, Nicholas Filbeck was appointed postmaster of Terre Haute, and served two full terms of four years each. It was during this time that Terre Haute became a second-class office and given free delivery effective October, 1879, with six carriers, nine clerks, and 40 street boxes.

By 1880, the post office ran out of room. The mails were constantly arriving and departing over various railroad lines. William F. Arnold was assistant postmaster. There was a money-order and registry clerk; two mailing clerks; one box and general-delivery clerk; one general clerk; one supervisor of seven letter carriers and one substitute. The city was divided into seven postal districts, and there were over 2,000 post office boxes.

On Dec. 13, 1881, a bill was introduced in Congress to appropriate $150,000 for the purpose of securing the site and erecting a suitable government building in Terre Haute. That is, the bill appropriated $75,000 and limited total expenditure to $150,000.

Offered nearly every desirable property in town, the government chose the southwest corner of Seventh and Cherry streets, and the building was started during the summer of 1884, completed in 1887. D. C. Greiner was postmaster during this time. The life

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of this building was comparatively short, as it was torn down to make way for the present government building which opened September, 1935.

During construction, business went on as usual in temporary quarters at the southwest corner of Eighth and Cherry streets. One of the facades of that former building was removed and reassembled on Dresser Drive in Fairbanks Park as a memorial to Chauncey Rose.

Post Office Update

The latest figures from the post office show quite a difference from the early times when a few letters were carried in Postmaster Coleman's hat. There are now 65 regular carriers, 11 substitutes, 189 regular clerks and 12 substitutes employed along with 10 mail handlers, nine rural carriers, and 33 supervisors. The downtown post office is now only one of five substations — the main post office is located in the annex at 1925 S. 13th St.

Robert Huffman assumed the office of Postmaster following the resignation of Frank Miklozek in 1974.

The following is a list of Terre Haute postmasters which is as nearly complete and accurate as records permit:

Curtis Gilbert—Dec.4,1817 to Oct.26,1818

John M. Coleman—Oct.26,1818 to Feb.,1828

John F. Cruft—Feb.,1828 to Feb.,1830

Francis Cunningham—Feb.,1830 to 1837

George B. Graff—1837 to July,1839

Joseph O. Jones—July 29,1839 to 1844(1st time)

Stephen G. Dodge—1845 to 1848

James T. Moffatt—1849 to 1852

Joseph O. Jones—May 6,1853 to 1856(2nd time)

Burwell H. Cornwell—1856 to 1860

Edward B. Allen—1860 to 1861

Joseph O. Jones—Mar.28,1861 to 1866(3rd time)

Dr. Ezra Read—1866 to 1868

Linus A. Burnett—1869 to 1872

Nicholas Filbeck—1873 to 1881

Joseph O. Jones—1881 to June, 1885(4th time)

John F. Regan—1885 to 1888

David C. Greiner—1889 to 1892

Allen H. Donham—1893 to 1896

Frank E. Benjamin—1897 to 1900

Samuel E. Gray—1901 to 1909

Thatcher A. Parker—1910 to 1913

John J. Cleary—1914 to 1922

John A. Austermiller—1923 to 1926

William G. Hays—1927 to 1931

John W. Wood—1932 to 1936

Jerome F. Shandy—1936 to 1950

Frank L. Miklozek—1950 to 1974

Robert Huffman—1974 to present time.

Ts MAY 1 1 1980

'Those were difficult days for mail carriers...'

Postal Service (TH)

Historically Speaking

Community Affairs File

By Dorothy Clark

At the turn of the century, 80 years ago, Robert H. Sweeny, a Vandalia Railroad telegraph operator, took the post office civil service examination and made the highest grade in the class. This earned him an early appointmetnt.

At 83 years of age, Sweeny had the distinction of being the oldest living retired mail carrier of the Terre Haute Post Office. He told of his birth in 1873 in County Tipperary, Ireland, and coming to America in 1889 at the age of 15. His older brother George had come to Indiana earlier and learned to be a telegraph operator. He persuaded young Robert to also become a telegraph operator, which work he followed for about ten years.

When Sweeny was employed at the local Post Office, Samuel Gray was the Postmaster. In 1901 the mail carriers were (according to their route numbers): Phil Jacobs, No.1; Oliver Hess, No.2; Frank Shirley, No.3; Fred Erne, No.4; Billy Bledsoe, No.5; Bill Apman, No.6; John Rishel, No.7; David Smith, No.8; John Lewellyn, No.9 Eddie Clark, No.10.

Also, Harvey Jackson, No.11; Bill Avery, No.12; Walter Elliott, No.13; Otto Hornung, No.14; Al Mogle, No.15; Lew Rhinehart, No.16; John Byers, No.17; Benny Garwood, No.18; Eddie Cline, No.19; Harry Jackson, No.20; Bill Kruzan, No.21; Sam Trogdon, No.22; Fred Tyler, No.23; John Owens, No.24; George Blood, No.25; Mr. Sweeny became No.26, and Oka Denehie was appointed the same day as No.27.

Difficult Days

Those were difficult days for the mail carriers. During the probation year the salary was $50 per month, afterwards $72 per month. They worked six days a week, eight hours a day, and three hours on Sunday.

After the carrier came to work in the morning and put up his mail, citizens were allowed to come to the window and get their mail. Then the postmaster decided to allow people to come in to the carrier's case between 9 and 10 a.m. to pick up mail directly from the carrier.

In the afternoon each carrier was supposed to go out and collect mail

Continued —

rangement tucked it behind a shutter or left it with a good neighbor.

Further out where Mr. Sweeny had his mounted route, he drove down the middle of the street, stopping in front of each house for which he had mail and blowing his whistle. The housewife would wave acknowledgement, and he would toss the mail on the grass and go on. If she was not at home, he would take the mail back to the post office to be delivered again the next day, unless previous arrangememts had been made to leave the mail at the neighbors.

Remember that mailboxes were not in existence yet. The public had to be slowly educated to the fact that mailboxes were necessary and a decided convenience for themselves as well as for the mail carrier.

Proud of Uniform

In those days a postman was proud of his uniform and the minute he received news of his appointment, put it on and wore it proudly. Mr. Sweeny retired from the post office after 37 years service in 1938. He married Margaret Roach, daughter of Ed Roach, groceryman, in 1898. They took up housekeeping at Fourth and Eagle streets, and had one son, Claude H. Sweeny who became an engineer for the State Highway Department at Valparaiso, Ind.

out of the mailboxes, but the carriers made up a "pool" to pay a man three hours' time to gather the mail for them. The first collector to have a wagon was Dave Smith in 1902.

Other early carriers were Valentine Bamberger, No.28; Glen Snyder, No.29; Anson Van Gilder, No.30; S. Jones, No.31; Ed Kruzan, No.32, and William "Buster" Armpriester, No.33. As retirements and deaths took their toll, new men were hired. J. C. Anderson became No.3, and E. E. "Pop" Fuller became No.21.

Postman Wagon

Mr. Sweeny carried both a foot route and an early mounted route. Driving a one-horse postman wagon of canvas over a wooden frame and four wheels, he delivered mail in the north part of town, beginning his route at the 2400 block on North Sixteenth Street, on to the 3200 block north, and everything west to the river.

Returning to town, he came down as far as Seventh Street and Maple Avenue, and on south and west to the 600 block on Water Street. His postman wagon was manufactured in Terre Haute under a government contract, and they were in use all over the country.

Mail delivery was very different 80 years ago than it is today. There were only about a dozen mailboxes in the city, the first was placed in the 700 block on Ohio Street. The city carriers handed the mail personally to the householder or by previous ar-

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Historically Speaking Community Affairs File

By Dorothy Clark

Byways — a new perspective

Ts SEP 1 4 1980

It's fun to drive the back roads, staying off the interstates and busy highways, especially when returning to your hometown. I try to approach it from different directions, see it in a new perspective. Otherwise we're like rats in a maze, only knowing one route to get the bit of cheese as a reward.

Recently driving back from a brief trip, I avoided the main roads and took each byway as the fancy struck me. The autunn night was cool and fragrant.

The wheat had been harvested, but trees still held their leaves. The apple orchards were heavy with fruit. All was fresh from tbe recent rain. In the hedgerows something sweet-smelling still bloomed.

Perhaps there would be a St. Luke's Summer, a last burst of clear, sunny spring-like weather before winter comes. The moon shone from a clear sky, turning the river to silver and the landscape to magic. I felt the enchantment looking at the Wabash Valley I loved, imagining it as it looked through the centuries.

Farm houses stetched back into the fields; a church steeple reached for heaven. Slowing down as I approached the churchyard, I lingered there, contemplating the dark graves, the long-dead resting peacefully.

At the top of a rise, I stopped and looked around, down at the barns with their sleeping animals, the houses dark with curtains drawn. The land seemed a haven of peace, yet those who were buried in the churchyard, in the older burial mounds along the river, and in the new cemeteries nearer town with headstones still white as bleached bone, all those who had gone before could tell a different tale.

Sitting there in the quiet, it was as if I could see them live again — the mysterious Mound Builders; the peaceful Indians living along the Wabash River who watched in fear as marauding bands of other more war-like tribes approached in dugout canoes or on foot; the white man's explorations into the Wabash Valley and his steadily increasing numbers pushing the red men farther and farther west.

I heard the battle of Fort Harrison and saw its flames; the men who surveyed and plotted the little village of Terre Haute; the builders of the National Road; the Irish laborers who came to cut the route of the Wabash and Erie Canal; the railroad construction men who made it possible for the waves of emigrants

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from Europe to come here and build factories, breweries, and all our industry.

I saw the men who left to fight in the Mexican War in the 1840s, the Civil War in the 1860s, the Spanish-American War in the 1890s, World War I in 1914, World War II in the 1940s, the Korean Conflict in 1950, and the Vietnam War in the 1970s. So many men to leave the Valley, some never to return alive, but only to be buried in the graveyards.

No where in the Wabash Valley is the sense of history more apparent than Woodlawn Cemetery where veterans of all the wars of the United States are buried — over 200 years of conflict, from the American Revolution and the War of 1812 to the present time.

These patriotic men felt it was their duty to fight for freedom, believing in their country, right or wrong.

So many men and women, their hopes and dreams and passions gone and put to rest, and only the earth itself remains, sleeping in fragile peace under the decpeptive moon.

With the motor silent, I listened to the small night sounds all about me — the flutter of a dying leaf, slowly falling, the barking of a dog restless in the moonlight, distant traffic sounds and the angry bee-buzzing of a motorcycle. Over all this peace a plane passed by winking its little colored lights.

This was the Wabash Valley on a late summer night — my chosen dwelling place. I would trade it for no other, I decided as I turned on the ignition key and started for home.

Wabash Avenue — over a century ago

Streets (7th)

Historically Speaking

By Dorothy Clark

T FEB 28 1981

Part 1

With the seeming interest in downtown Terre Haute, it's interesting to remember what we know as Wabash Avenue was like over a century ago. On the original plat map of the town in 1816, it was named Wabash Street, and later was called National Road Street and Main Street before it became known as Wabash Avenue (called "Bash" by the cruising teenagers).

This east-west street was not planned as the principal business artery. That was Market Street, now known as Third Street. Isn't it strange how the times have come full circle again, and now Third is the main artery and Wabash has become less important?

Early west-bound traffic had to leave Wabash or Main somewhere to reach the covered bridge at the foot of Ohio until the newer covered bridge and later the present bridge was built at the foot of Wabash. Main street is bypassed again by modern traffic flow west to Cherry street and east to Ohio street.

The merchants, bankers, doctors, attorneys and other business and professional interests of the thriving town grouped in the west end near the courthouse. The eastern edge of town was at the bridge over the Wabash and Erie Canal at Ninth-and-a-half street, but a few continued out to the corner of Wabash and Prairie, the present 13th St.

The lots of the original town were all east of Water street, with little business between Water and First streets, although John Heitman kept a cigar and tobacco shop in that block, and the north side of the street was taken up by a wagon yard. If there were any others, they have left no record.

Beginning at the northeast corner of First and Wabash was the wholesale grocery of Bement & Co., and to the east of it, the stove and tinware shop of G. F. and C. C. Smith. George Yeaman's carriage shop, and Charles Groverman's somewhat smelly fur and pelt shop.

On the south side of the street was the boot and shoe shop of Xavier Hahn. The next block east, facing the courthouse square, was the heart of the business district, with Adolph Arnold's clothing store on the corner of Second and Main. Max Joseph and Samuel Mack located their clothing store in the same block, and farther east were the two hardware stores of Simeon Cory and Potwin & Bush, the wholesale grocery of R. S. Cox & Son, and the two dry goods stores of F. Nippert & Bro. and M. W. Williams & Co.

Also, Warren & Porterfield's grocery, the hat and cap store of Jos. C. Yates, the jewelry store of J. M. and C. Crisher, and Doughty's Restaurant. The Prairie City Bank, John G. Wasson, agent for the B&O Railroad, Solomon Claypool, the attorney, James Farrington and Jesse Conrad had their offices in the block, probably over the drugstore of P. M. Donnelly on the northwest corner of Third and Wabash.

The northeast corner of Third and Wabash was occupied by the building known as Corinthian Hall, first place of public entertainment and built by Ezra W. Smith. On its lower floor at the corner was the clothing house of Arnold & Co., owned by D. H. Arnold, D. W. Minshall and Nathan Erlanger. The firm also had another clothing store farther east in the same block.

Also on the north side of the street in the block between Third and Fourth were Alschuler & Goodman, clothiers; Oliver Barlett's book and stationery store; Berlau & Groneau, merchant tailors; W. H. Buckingham, books and stationery; the millinery shop of Mrs. A. Childs; J. Cook & Co. hardware, and S. R. Freeman, jewelry.

Deck & Doll, one of Terre Haute's first shoe factories, along with their rivals, Whitworth & Isaacs and T. P. Murphy, all were located in the same block.

McKeen & Tousey's bank, L. Ryce & Sons drygoods store, as well as similar establishments of F. R. Whip-

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ple and Tuell & Brokaw and T. H. Barr & Co. drugstore on the northwest corner of Fourth and Wabash made up the rest of the large establishments on the north side of Wabash.

On the second floors of these buildings were the offices of Baird & Bassett, Chas. & Edw. Cruft, McLean & Crane, B. B. Moffatt, T. H. Nelson and I. N. Pierce, attorneys at law. Also in the same block were the offices of Tuell & Usher, land dealers; Alschuler & Nicoloy, photograph gallery; Watson & Shannon, bankers, and a notary public.

On the south side of Wabash in this block were C. H. Bailey's grocery, A. C. Furrow's grocery, Alex B. Irving, pianos; George Kerchoff & Co., leathers; Jacob Kern, jeweler; S. H. Potter & Co., hardware; Taylor & Rowlson, agents for Atwater's sewing machines, and the offices of W. B. Warren, pork packer; Dr. John M.Phipps, Dr. James T. Helms and Adam R. Miller, who styled himself "photographist."

John R. Cunningham had a drugstore in this block, but it's unknown as to which side of the street it was on.

Not all the business houses of very early days are known east of Fourth on Wabash, but on the north side was the tin shop of J. K. Graff & Co., Bernard W. Koopman's shoe shop, the tin shop of William Lockwood, Nippert & Co. drygoods store, Madigan & McHenry's saloon, Max Reisman's Union House, and the bakery of Frederick L. Rottman & John Zimmerman.

The south side of Wabash had rival dressmakers, Mrs. M. Abbott and Mrs. Martha Haynes; William H. Sage's confectionery; the hat and fur shop of Frederick Stanley, and George H. Whidden's grocery.

On the upper floors were Charles Eppert, early daguerrean artist, and Harbert & Barton, land agents, over Sage's.

Occupying locations not defined as other than between the two streets were the grocery of William Jenkins, Frederick Kronaur's confectionery, Ernest Ohm's boot and shoe shop, William Ryan's saloon, John C. Rosses drygoods store, C. Reichert's boot and shoe shop, and Weiller & Co. clothing store.

The Wabash Avenue of yesteryear will be continued next Sunday...

Historically Speaking

By Dorothy Clark

Wabash Avenue — Over a century ago

T MAR 7 1981

★★★★

Part II

★★★★

The recalling of business houses along what is now Wabash Avenue, but was known over a century ago as Wabash Street, was begun last Sunday. Today's column continues the listing of early days in downtown Terre Haute.

The slow eastward progress of the business district is shown by the residences that still stood in the block east of Fifth Street. Francis Bichowsky and and Uriah Jeffers, partners with Augustus Claussen in the tobacco and cigar business, probably lived over the store.

The dressmaking shops of Adams and Blood, Mrs. S. Clark, Miss Read and the two women named Mrs. Knapp, were all on the upper floors on the south side of the street. Mrs. Sarah H. Dobbin and Miss Read are not identified as on the southside however.

On the north side were Beauchamp's grocery and Gram's furniture and undertaking establishment. Also in the Block, on one side of the street or the other, were John A. Brun's saloon; P. J. Byrne's saloon, Samuel Hays, Boarding house, and Ira and Thomas J. Langford.

The corner of Fifth was then occupied by Francis Hulman's wholesale grocery, later the house of Hulman and Cox.

On the south side were Barney and Austin, land agents; Dr. S. V. Campbell; M. B. Hudson's glass and queensware store; Lucien Houriet's jewelry store; James Davis and John Goetz with their groceries; Dr. Fahnestock's office, and Alvin Dudley's carpenter shop (also his residence as his mother was listed as living there also).

Also Benjamin Ebbitt, city engineer; the groceries of James F. Murphy, Patrick and Co., and G. Weiss and Co.; Shaffer's boarding house and saloon; Frederick W. Stieffel, with his durg store below, and Dr. Edward Steiffel's office above, the Wabash Exchange saloon; Watkins and Slaughter's hardware store; M. B. Hudson's glass and queensware store, and the dental office of J. F. Warren.

The National Hotel stood at Sixth and Wabash, and Charles Springer, clothier, was on the corner of Fifth, but which corner is unknown. Wyeth and Barney, land dealers, Charles M. Berger, carpenter, and the gas office were also in this block.

The long block from Sixth to Seventh streets was then but partly built. It would be another 25 years before it was completely built up -- even as now, and parking lots were not even dreamed of in those horse and buggy days.

On the north side there were a few business houses, one the grocery of William Grace. On the south side as Sixth was the drygoods store of Edsal, McDougall and Co., predecessor of the present Roots Store.

Philip Bianchi, John Wurtzebach, August Reinhardt, George Schnell and Dr. William L. Mahan were in this block, as were the saloons of P. Katzwnbach and Co., John W. Lemmer and Henry A. Ostendorf. Goetz and Teichman, cabinet makers; Charles A. Moench and his brother, Theodore, merchant tailors; William Patrick, painter and glazier, and Charles Woelfle, boot maker, were here also.

The block between Seventh and Eighth street held nothing but the Terre Haute House, considered almost out of town, and the next block from Eighth to Ninth depended more on canal business. Here were located the bakery and confectionery of Francis Frey, the grocery of A. E. Reiman, and two others, the property of Charles Klengler and J. H. Pahmeyer, and the saloon of John Dietz.

Between Ninth street and the Wabash and Ereie Canal was the Estern Hotel conducted by A. McGuire, a favorite resort of the rougher element of the canal boat trade, the grocery of William C. Carey, and the boarding house and saloon of George Longsdorf at the northeast corner of Ninth, later to become the well Known landmark called the "Pig and Whistle."

From here, Wabash Street crossed the bridge over the canal. Just beyond this and down below the street level on the canal bank was the warehouse of Turner and McKeen. It was here, a few years earlier, that in an attempt to unload the locomotives for the Terre Haute and Richmond Railroad, they were spilled into the canal.

Still farther east on the south side, beyohnd the E&C railroad, stood the famous National Road House, owned and operated by Carl Seeman.

Much farther east at the corner of Prairie was the grocery of John Ferrel, the first and last chance of arriving and departing travelers.

The farm land east of 13th, Gilbert's on the south and Jewett's on the north, would be cut later into additions and subdivisions of the growing town, later city of Terre Haute.

Gas street lamps on tall, slender cast iron posts were scattered here and there, usually a block apart on Wabash.

Traffic was light during the day and almost non-existent at night. Perhaps a stage coach rumbled into town, or a light carriage with a family caught by nightfall before reaching their night's lodging, or perhaps a doctor in his buggy on an emergency call.

During the day there were a few teams and wagon loads on the way to the far western prairies of Illinois or even as far as "bleeding Kansas" or Missouri. Local traffic was mostly the heavy two-wheeled drays bringing merchandise from the railroad depots and canal warehouse to the merchants.

In those days the shopper usually brought his basket and took his purchases away with him. Storekeepers did not deliver until later. In an early advertisement, a local merchant stated that he had bought a "neat express wagon" by which the goods of the customer would be sent to his home "neatly and with dispatch."

Community Affairs File

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There were grade crossing troubles for Terre Haute in 1883

T APR 4 1981

Railroads (T, H)

Historically Speaking

By Dorothy Clark

There has probably never been a more complicated case in the history of Indiana than the legal proceedings that grew out of the first efforts made by the City of Terre Haute in 1883 to establish a grade crossing over the Evansville and Terre Haute Railroad tracks at Ohio Street.

The railroad wanted to build a viaduct over Ohio Street for the street traffic, but the city fathers didn't go along with the idea. They wanted the city to have the right-of-way for a through street at that location.

In 1902, the E and TH Railroad sued the city for $200,000 damages, which they believed would result in the opening of Ohio Street. The lawsuit was taken to Parke County, and the railroad company was awarded $60,000 damages. The case was appealed to the Supreme Court, and was still pending when the City Council voted to issue bonds to pay the judgement.

To further complicate matters at this point, the City Council was enjoined pending the lawsuit of J.G. Heinl to restrain the city from issuing bonds. The local court's decision is 1903 left the city free to issue bonds to the amount of $40,000, and the other $20,000 was to be raised from property owners.

Other city progress reported at that time was the paving of Gilbert Avenue from Wabash to Orchard streets, the pet project of Mayor Steeg as Steeg Park had been purchased by the city for $25,000.

Fourth Street from Poplar to Hulman streets was being paved with brick. The city fathers voted $175,000 for the new river bridge, and the formal opening of the Fort Harrison Club was announced. Steamboats ran all that Sunday in April, 1903, up to Fort Harrison for the festivities.

By Sept. 1, 1903, an Indianapolis firm had brought the bonds for $44,000 plus $900 in premiums. The bonds drew four percent interest and ran for 20 years. The city already had $21,500 on hand, so as soon as the money was received, Mayor Steeg sent the city attorneys, Foley and McNutt, to Rockville to the Parke County Circuit Court.

This took place Sept. 17, 1903, and from that time until the following spring, the railroad tried to fulfill its part of the bargain. Ohio Street was formally opened across the E and TH tracks on the morning of April 1, 1904.

There was no brass band, no speeches, but Major Steeg was present with his "dollar tax rate smile" and drove the last spike, a silver one donated by the railroad, in the west end of the crossing.

A thousand or more spectators cheered as the mayor struck blow after blow on the silver spike, the last act in the long war between the railroad and the city for possession of Ohio Street. In this writer's opinion, the city lost. Witness the long lines impatiently waiting 77 years later for trains to clear the crossing. The railroad's idea of the viaduct would have been better.

There's always a race to be first in this town, so who was going to be first across the tracks on opening day? John R. Connelly, general agent for the railroad, believed that Cornelius Meagher with "Old Nancy" should be the first across the tracks as he fought so hard for the opening of the street. As the representative of the city, Fire Chief Daugherty insisted on his right to be first.

Well, as soon as the engine used to block the crossing backed south with a line of freight cars, Joe Mauch, driving a delivery wagon from the east side of the tracks, turned in quickly and came within inches of running into Chief Daugherty in his horse-drawn city rig which was waiting for the freight cars to get by the crossing so he could get over the last track.

According to Charles W. Hyde of the railroad, there were 36,000 feet of timber in the crossing. The construction gang had worked night and day to get the crossing planked, working by torchlight at night.

Final results of the race across the tracks were Daugherty, first; Meagher, second; R.L. Alder, first wheelman (bicycle rider) to cross; W.L. Holdaway, first with a coal wagon; Patsey Mahaney, third with a rig, and the first engine to cross the silver spike was C. and E.I. No. 85.

And that's the way it was, on Ohio Street,

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Historically Speaking

Valley T s OCT 4 1981

History of grade between city, West Terre Haute recounted

By DOROTHY CLARK
Tribune-Star Writer

Local historians are frequently asked questions that defy a quick and complete answer. For example, how old is the grade between Terre Haute and West Terre Haute? Let's approach the answer chronologically.

When people and their animals on the west side of the river wanted to come over to Terre Haute, or vice versa, they used rafts, then ferry boats, until the first covered bride was built over the river at the foot of Ohio Street in 1847.

A cart track and finally a rude road was cut through the bottom lands west of the river and wound its way to the little town of Macksville, now called West Terre Haute, a community which grew up around the need for stores to supply the workers on the construction gangs for the National Road.

Actual construction of the National Road through Vigo County began in the spring of 1834. Work began in Indianapolis and pushed across the state.

Major Ogden of the U.S. Army was government superintendent of the work through this section. At that time the road crossed the river on the bridge at Ohio Street, but in times of high water the road was under water.

The only available transportation was by the ferry boat which plied its way to Macksville through the clearing in the trees south of the present road.

When the bottom lands were covered to a depth that prohibited fording and was not sufficient to allow passage of ferry boats, then travelers and mail were transported in skiffs, but emigrants and wagoners often were obliged to stay two to three weeks in Terre Haute or West Terre Haute waiting to cross.

Looking ahead to future plans for the river and bridge crossings, the Terre Haute Draw Bridge Company was formed in 1846. The earlier uncovered wooden bridge at Ohio Street was described as stone, built in 1840, lasted until 1847, with stone supports, partly trestle and partly timber bends on mudsill, with short spans or timber stringers. The draw sections were on the west, and was the first bridge on the Indiana border with a movable span. Because of the short spans and mudsill construction, sections were taken out frequently by floods.

The new toll bridge in 1847 cost $10,000 and was built entirely of wood standing on wooden posts instead of stone pillars. The builders were Tindal A. Madison and Thompson Hall. The draw was exactly 50 feet wide and at the east end of the bridge. It was constructed to slide from east to west to open.

On Feb. 10, 1847, the first attempt to open the draw resulted in tragedy. Breaking off its carriage, the draw span plummeted down taking Madison and two workmen, Henry Smith and George Eastman, with it. Eastman drowned.

A few years later, a drove of cattle stampeded on the bridge and part of it fell. Two children were drowned and several cattle were lost.

The bridge seemed ill-fated as it was frequently disabled by steamboats crashing against the wooden piers. The current was very tricky near the bridge, and according to the water stage was difficult to maneuver with a heavily laden boat.

The stockholders of the Terre Haute Draw Bridge Company reorganized in 1856 and built the grade to Macksville at a cost of $20,000, even while the Ohio Stree bridge was still operative. The dirt grade was very narrow and hazardous, and when water washed through the fill just east of West Terre Haute, they were forced to build a wooden trestle.

Since the grade was built originally by the bridge company, the grade has been elevated over three feet.

On June 5, 1861, the company was granted the right by the county commissioners to divide its toll rate and collect separately for the use of either bridge or grade. However, the company never collected tolls for the use of the grade alone.

Because the Ohio Street bridge was frequently closed to traffic because of high water, fast currents, and people were forced to depend on ferry boats, the Terre Haute Draw Bridge Company had the building of a new bridge in mind when the Macksville grade was built.

In the fall of 1863, plans were drawn for a new bridge with stone piers to be erected at the foot of Wabash Street. The county commissioners signed the order granting the county the right to build the new bridge on Sept. 17, 1863 and work began in October.

The builders were Joseph J. Daniels of Rockville, who was responsible for the superstructure, and Hall and Kimble, who built the sub-structure. It cost $65,000 and was completed and open for traffic early in January, 1865. Described as a double covered bridge, it had five covered spans and two roadways on a Burr truss. The draw span was uncovered and located the second span from the west.

After all those years of paying tolls, citizens were finally able to cross the bridge free of charge when the county purchased the bridge from the Draw Bridge Company in 1874 for $80,000 including the grade.

In the summer of 1889, the wooden draw was replaced by an iron drawbridge, and by 1890 there were so few steamboats on the river a drawbridge was not necessary. Up until 1901 the bridge had cost very little for repairs, but by 1903 was considered weak and unsafe for the proposed street car service to Macksville.

The old covered bridge was removed, and the present bridge was built on the old stone piers. It was constructed at a cost of $271,000 and was opened with dedication ceremonies on Oct. 17, 1905.

After a series of accidents the grade was made wider so two wagons could pass without one falling in. Many readers can remember when the grade was paved, and driving over to Macksville was made safe and simple for the first time in the community's long history.

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BETWEEN THE LINES

THE STORY BEHIND THE STORY...

By Josie

Q. *I read that somebody tried to steal the stars off of the sidewalk on Hollywood Boulevard. Whose stars were they? Sheila H., Patterson, N.J.*

A. Carol Burnett's, for one. The would-be thief tried to chisel the star bearing her name right out of the cement but failed. Someone else (or perhaps the same person) tried to heist Olivia Newton-John's star on the night before it was to be installed in special ceremonies. They also failed, but left a ragged mess of the star. Olivia accepted it graciously anyway.

Q. *What's happening to my favorite band, The Beach Boys? Are they breaking up so each can go solo? C. Jayson, Portland, Ore.*

A. As Carl Wilson explained it, he went out on his own because the other guys seem mired in their old surfing classics, while he wanted to get on to something new. Others say Wilson's heart just wasn't in the group effort anymore and he resented the group's staying together just for the money. The Beach Boys still have their share of fans, but even the most hardened observers were a little shocked at their performance at a recent L.A. concert. Brian Wilson stalked off the stage when the sound system wouldn't work and Dennis Wilson threw a plant at the audience, then turned his back and dropped his pants. The next Beach Boy scheduled to depart for a solo is lead singer Mike Love.

Q. *Pat Benatar looks so hard-edged on her album covers. Is she a "real tough cookie" in real life? J. Ridgeway, Baton Rouge, La.*

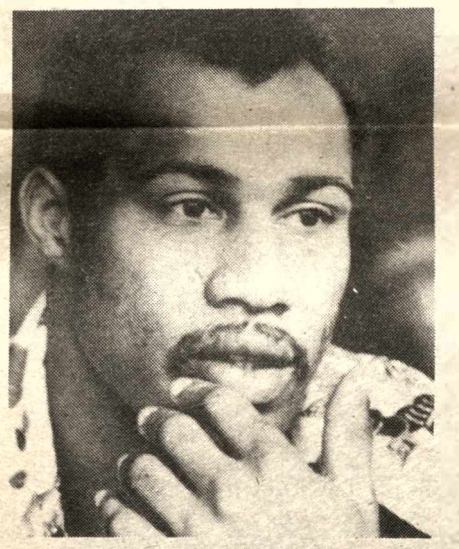
A. No, her friends say she's a pussycat. Benatar's tough side is largely a result of the cute image she had while growing up. "I was a really straight kid," she says. "But I was small and I hated being left out of baseball and other sports because they (the boys) thought I couldn't do them. Then when I started to sing, everyone told me I was too cutesy to do hard rock. So I got angry." The rough edge was her defense, but she admits now that she may have overdone it.

Q. *I really loved Bill Murray on "Saturday Night Live," but I don't think his movie roles have done him justice. Any chance he'll return to TV? J. Sheperd, Mobile, Ala.*

A. If he could get the same combination of talents that "SNL" had during its heyday, he might be doing better work. Murray admits that his best performances were done on that show. "Movies are tough," he says. "It's a different rhythm, artifical — movies are manufactured. You don't get the special oomph that you get from working with a live TV audience." His choices of films — "Where the Buffalo Roam," "Meatballs," "Caddyshack" and "Stripes" were hardly acclaimed for their script or direction. Murray isn't taking his film flops too hard, however; he says if the movie business doesn't work out, he can always go back to making pizza in the window of an Italian restaurant, the job he had before entering the comedy arena.

Q. *I'm crazy about that guy who sings and dances in the Dr. Pepper commercials. Why isn't he making movies? Harry L., Amarillo, Tex.*

A. After four years of his snappy "I'm a Pepper" performances, actor David Naughton figures he's had enough soda pop selling. His movie, "An America Werewolf in London" is a success with the blood-and-gore fans and he's looking to star in more movie projects.



Q. *I'm a big boxing fan and I was really disappointed in Jerry Cooney's 54-second knockout of Ken Norton. Norton was a great fighter — what's he going to do now? J. Heilburton, Columbus, Ohio.*

A. Following the well-traveled but largely unsuccessful route taken by most retired athletes, Norton says he wants to act. Before he starts, he'd be wise to remember the nightclub debut of fellow ex-boxer Joe Frazier. In the TV commercial for beer in which Frazier and backup singers appeared, the drinkers at the bar departed when he opened his mouth. In his nightclub appearances, the response wasn't much different.

Q. *Maurice Gibb has always been my favorite Bee Gee — is he the "quiet brother" of the group? G. Keteret, Santa Monica, Calif.*

A. No, you may get that impression because he's been professionally overshadowed by Big Brother Barry. Musically, Maurice is starting to come to the forefront. He's always written songs but now he's starting to sing lead, as he did on their recent album "Livin' Eyes." Maurice has always been known to be quite a prankster. His fantasy is to become a policeman and during past Bee Gee tours, he's dressed up like one and "arrested" people. Prudent tour managers always interceded however, and lately they have convinced him to cut out the funny stuff.

Anything you'd like to know about prominent personalities? Write: "Between the Lines," Terre Haute Tribune-Star, 721 Wabash Ave., Terre Haute, Ind., 47808. We regret we cannot answer any letters individually.

Community Affairs File

Historically Speaking

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Interurban lines leave reminders of Terre Haute in earlier times

T s JAN 24 1982

Transportation (TH)

By DOROTHY CLARK
Tribune-Star Writer

Although the days of the interurban lines have passed into history, they have left many permanent reminders of their earlier existence. Newcomers to the area frequently ask the meaning of the stop numbers on the Lafayette Road north of the city.

The last interurban motorman living in Terre Haute was John R. Rardin. He was born in Edgar County, Ill., and came to Terre Haute the last day of 1899 where he lived the rest of his long life.

He and his wife, the former Hannah Sprague, lived first at the Hudnut house, 621 Cherry St., and watched the building of the Deming Hotel. His earliest memories of the city included the wheat and oat fields east of 19th Street on Wabash Avenue, and nothing but a few farm houses north of Maple Avenue and south of Hulman Street.

Rardin was employed first as a salesman for the Underwood Furniture Store on South Fourth Street, which was purchased by Mr. Lenhart. He quit this job to become a city street car motorman for six months, and in 1901 became an interurban motorman, the youngest man ever employed by Mr. Nash, the superintendent.

Being such a junior operator, it was quite an honor for him to be chosen to operate the second interurban to Brazil and to Sullivan which took officials on an inspection trip of the new lines.

Rardin could remember some of the early motormen. They included John Brewster, Tom Kirkham, Joe Elliott, Bob Martin, Charles Knisely, Harvey Sprague (his brother-in-law), Bill Hess and Pat Haley who taught Rardin on the Clinton line. Haley later became a city policeman.

Rardin remained on the Clinton line for 14 years with its 76 stops and booster station at Atherton. The fare to Clinton and Brazil was 25 cents; 35 cents to Sullivan and Paris, Ill.

The top salary was 37 cents an hour for ten hours a day. City motormen didn't get that much. However, money went further in those days. He was paying only $6 a month house rent, and could buy a week's groceries for $3. By 1957 bus drivers were still only making $1.40 per hour.

The Interurban Terminal was located on the north side of Wabash between Eighth and Ninth streets. The arcade style building had an open passage-way from Wabash to the waiting station in the rear.

Interurbans were electric cars run on tracks with trolley wires above the car. Wires were charged with electricity from power stations along the tracks. Usually the cars ran alone, but sometimes at rush hours there were several sections run one after the other.

From Terre Haute there were interurbans to Indianapolis, Sullivan, Clinton and Paris. The first lines in Indiana were built for short distances only. The electric lines became very popular as they charged less per mile than the railroads. They also ran many cars a day. Indianapolis became the greatest interurban center in the world.

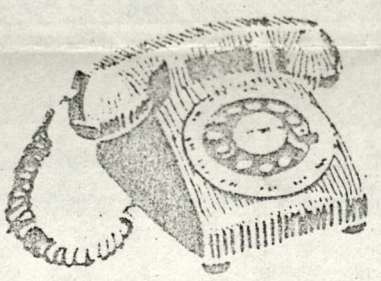
Terre Haute got its first street railway during the 1880s, but the extension of the lines to suburban points and maintenance of first class service didn't come until the late 1890s. The line to Paris opened in the fall of 1907.

The interurbans lasted approximately 40 years. It was after World War I before highways were improved and the gravel roads began to be used by automobiles, buses and trucks. Then the interurbans had less and less business. The bus line from Terre Haute to Clinton charged five cents less than the interurban fare and took away its business at a great rate.

One by one the many electric lines were sold, track taken up, and the last interurban car made its last trip in Indiana in 1941. It was very unfortunate that it ceased operation, for it would have been a great asset during World War II with gas rationing and other transportation difficulties. The last run was the year World War II began.

The interurban brought electrification to rural areas that would not have had it until much later with Rural Electrification. Many country roads which intersected the interurban lines are still called by the interurban numbered stop, such as Stop 20, Clinton Line.

Listen.
Answer.
Describe.
Meet.
Sell.
Collect.
Spend.
Enjoy. Then
call us again when you
you have something else
you want to sell.



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Historically Speaking

Streets once closed at tracks

Valley
T s MAR 2 6 1982

BY DOROTHY J. CLARK

Newcomers to Terre Haute would find it hard to believe that Ohio and Walnut streets were once closed at the C.&E.I. Railroad crossings. The opening of Ohio Street crossing by the railroad and city officials was quite an event.

Terre Haute is renowned for its complicated problems with the railroads. There has probably never been a more mixed up case in the history of Indiana than the legal proceedings that grew out of the first efforts made by the city in 1883 to establish a grade crossing over the E.&T.H. tracks on Ohio Street.

The railroad wanted to build a viaduct over Ohio Street for the street traffic, but the city fathers didn't go along with the idea. They wanted the city to have the right-of-way for a through street at that point.

In 1902 the E.&T.H. Railroad sued the city for $200,000 damages which they believed would result from the opening of Ohio Street. The lawsuit was venued to Parke County and the railroad was awarded $60,000 damages. The case was appealed to the Supreme Court and was still pending when the City Council voted to issue bonds to pay the judgement.

To further complicate matters at this point, the City Council was enjoined pending the lawsuit of J. G. Heinl to restrain the city from issuing bonds. The local court's decision left the city free to issue bonds to the amount of $40,000 and the other $20,000 to be raised from property owners.

Other city progress in 1903 was the paving of Gilbert Avenue from Wabash to Orchard Street (due, no doubt, to the pet project of Mayor Henry C. Steeg, the park at 14th and Wabash to be named for him, and purchased by the city for $25,000).

Fourth Street was paved from Poplar to Hulman in 1903, and the city fathers voted $175,000 for the new bridge to be built over the Wabash.

By Sept. 1, 1903, an Indianapolis firm bought the bonds, and as soon as they were printed and delivered here they were signed by Mayor Steeg and City Clerk Buckingham and returned to Indianapolis. For the bonds the city received $44,000 plus $900 premiums with the bonds to draw four percent interest and run for 20 years. On Sept. 17, the city's attorneys Foley and McNutt took the checks to Rockville as promised.

From this time until the following spring, the railroad was busily trying to fulfill its part of the bargain. Ohio Street was formally opened across the E.&T.H. tracks on the morning of April 1, 1904.

There was no brass band, no speeches, but Mayor Steeg was there with his "dollar tax rate smile," and drove the last spike, a silver one donated by the railroad,

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in the west end of the crossing.

Over a thousand spectators cheered as the mayor struck blow after blow on the silver spike, the last act in the long war between the railroad and the city for possession of Ohio Street. Also attending were City Attorney Foley, Street Commissioner Stokes, Police Chief Lyons and Fire Chief Daugherty.

John R. Connelly, general agent of the railroad, believed that Cornelius Meagher with "Old Nancy" should be the first across the tracks because of his fight for the street opening. However, Daugherty insisted on his right to be first.

As soon as the engine used to block the crossing backed south with the line of freight cars, Joe Mauch turned in with his horse-drawn delivery wagon and came within inches of running into Chief Daugherty in his city rig which was waiting for the freight cars to clear the crossing.

According to Charles W. Hyde of the railroad, there were 36,000 feet of timber in the crossing. The crowd had gathered before 9 a.m., and the construction gang had been working night and day to get the crossing planked. The previous night the men worked by torchlight.

The final results of the race across the tracks were Daugherty, first; Meagher, second; R. L. Alder, first wheel man to cross (bicycle); W. L. Holdaway, first with a coal wagon; Patsey Mahaney, third with a rig; and the first engine to cross the silver spike was C.& E.I. No.85.

Does anyone know who was first across the tracks when Walnut Street was opened?

Railroads in Wabash Valley opened markets in the west

JUL 17

Historically speaking

By Dorothy J. Clark

Terre Haute's first effort to reach an outside market was the Terre Haute & Richmond Railroad, built after the canal began service here. It was rushed along because of the completion of the Madison & Indianapolis Railroad, Indiana's first.

The route to Louisville and Cincinnati was open, and desire for an outlet to the Mississippi turned to a railroad west. July 18, 1852, a meeting at Charleston, Ill., brought about the organization of the Springfield & Terre Haute Railroad. Among the incorporators were Chauncey Rose, John Brough, E. J. Peck, Thomas H. Nelson, Chauncey Warren, Alex McGregor, James Farrington, John P. Usher, Jacob D. Early, W. D. Griswold and John O'Boyle.

Eleven of the 41 men attending were from Terre Haute, but there were also attending from Illinois Ninian W. Edwards, Elijah Iles and a young man who modestly signed his name as A. Lincoln. Politics then as now did not always mean progress, so aside from the incorporation of the road little more was done.

The Terre Haute & Alton Railroad was built by eastern capital. The whole line was let as a single contract for a fixed sum to a group that understood politics as well as or better than railroads. Their names survive in stations along the road such as Litchfield and Mattoon.

It began in 1852 and found part of the work laid out for the old road started by the state of Illinois in 1837 and abandoned when Illinois, like Indiana, lost millions in their attempt to build public roads in advance of their time. A road from central Illinois to Indiana had been graded and many of the bridges and culverts built before the state abandoned it. The new road took this over at little or no cost.

The Illinois Assembly could not see an outlet at St. Louis in another state but granted a franchise to a road to Alton. This was the route later used by the Big Four and connection to the eastern road was made from the crossing of Sixth and the Big Four by a track that crossed Spruce about Ninth Street and ran diagonally across the space between the two railroads.

The Alton road stock was partly owned by the interests that owned the Pittsburgh, Fort Wayne & Chicago Railroad when the former began the consideration of an extension of their road from Terre Haute to Indianapolis, the minority stockholders swung their support to the building of a parallel road across Illinois and the St. Louis, Vandalia & Terre Haute Railroad was built from St. Louis to the Illinois-Indiana Line, while the Terre Haute & Indianapolis Railroad extended to meet it there.

By Sept. 18, 1867, work had been started on the I. & St.L. to Indianapolis, and a week later the roadbed of the St.L. V. & T.H. had been laid from the Mississippi to Highland and the grading done to Greenville. Work was slow, and in 1869 less than a mile of the western line was built on the line of the old Wabash & Erie Canal at a low cost. A contract was let to the Keystone Bridge Company for an iron bridge 830 feet long across the Wabash River, at a cost of $75,000.

From the river to the higher ground to the west a fill 6,000 feet long and an average of 18 feet high was needed while still farther west a cut 1,200 feet long and 25 feet deep in rock required expensive blasting.

The railroad company built the abutments and the piers and the estimated cost of the bridge was $150,000, the fill $120,000, and the iron bridge over Sugar Creek an added $15,000. Wooden bridges would cost $6,000 over the smaller streams, 64½ pound rails added $60,000 with ties, bolts, splices, spikes and track laying estimated at $24,000 or more.

Altogether the estimate called for about $8 million and bonds bearing seven percent interest to the amount of $348,000 had been sold and $252,000 more would be needed, making in all a new debt of $600,000.

Work on the road was complete from St. Louis to Effingham in July, and through traffic was expected to begin in May, 1870. April 14, 1870, George E. Farrington drove with great ceremony the last spike in the road and the bridge was to be ready by the 25th. This is how the Vandalia Railroad came to be so great a part of earlier Terre Haute.

Articles of incorporation were filed June 28, 1871, for the Cincinnati & Terre Haute Railway. Survey of the route began July 17 and the first few shovels of dirt were turned near Lockport, now Riley, Ind., Dec. 4. This must have been the deadline for beginning construction for surely the weather must have been a factor.

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Dorothy Clark / Roads, Streets, Highways (T.H.)

Streets of Terre Haute laid out in 1816

Community Affairs File

TS APR 29 1984

Historically speaking

Clark is Vigo County's official historian and formerly worked for The Terre Haute Tribune.

By Dorothy Clark
Special to The Tribune-Star

When the streets of Terre Haute were laid out by the surveyor in 1816, he used the Wabash river as the main artery of travel, which it was then, and so he laid out Second and Third Streets, Ohio and Wabash, to accommodate the expected travel and become the highways of the future running in the same directions.

Four years earlier in 1812, William Harris had surveyed the towns and ranges of Vigo County for the government, so he was hired by the town proprietors to survey their property lying between Seventh Street and the river from Locust to Hulman. Harris made one move that is to any engineer incomprehensible.

Harris ignored the corner of the present Seventh and Poplar Streets and located Lot. No. 1 at the northwest corner of Fifth and Swan, a half block south of this stone. In consequence, the line of Poplar did not coincide with the line of the future county road to be known as the Bloomington Road.

As time went on and the town grew to its boundary on the east, Chauncey Rose laid out his Rose's Addition. He chose that corner as his starting point and laid out the lots between Poplar and Ohio. Harris foresaw this and the south line of the outlot on which the Vigo County Public Library now stands was run on the angle to meet this prospective street. Hence the bend there.

When the state road to Indianapolis was surveyed in 1821, the west end of it extended from the hill on the east to end at "the intersection of Fifth and Ohio Streets in the Town of Terre Haute." This line was followed very closely in 1834 when theCumberland Road was surveyed, with the seam point of termination and by Ohio Street to the river and on west.

Travel along this road increased until in 1838 when Rose built his famed tavern at Seventh and Wabash, the Prairie House. Travel continued across his lots to Seventh Street and across those of Curtis Gilbert to Sixth Street, treading but little on the lot between Sixth and Fifth.

Partly to avoid this use of his lands and partly, no doubt, to send travelers to and past the Prairie House, Rose built a fence along the side of the road between what is now Eighth and Ninth and put his permanent mark on Wabash Avenue.

The inlots of Terre Haute extended only to Eagle Street where Second Street stopped, but the owners of the two outlots bordering on the center line of Second and north of Eagle had the street opened to Chestnut where it remained until after the beginning of the Cross Cut Canal that later was to become an important link in the Wabash and Erie Canal and which ran from the turning basin, where the Growers Market was located later, in a northerly direction across Chestnut and blocked Second Street.

When the subdivision which lies north of Chestnut and east of First was laid out, Second Street was laid to the west of its southern part and a foot bridge spanned the canal.

Travel to the north from Vincennes and other points by which settlers came to Terre Haute continued on north by way of the old Army Road first used by Harrison on his way to Tippecanoe. While it now ends as the Prairieton Road at Pike's Peak, it then extended to Second Street and into town.

Later after the land had been taken up and was being put to use, the north travel from Terre Haute was diverted to make an angle across the township almost to what is now North Terre Haute. This created Lafayette Avenue.

As the lands of the upper sections of Honey Creek were settled, travel began to go back and forth from the territory that became Reilly township. Another diagonal road came into being, and was known as the Lockport Road, though more commonly called the Riley Road. This extended across Strawberry Hill to Sixth Street and possibly farther until buildings and fences stopped travel at Idaho corner.

What the significance of the names Idaho Corner or Pikes Peak might have been earlier, there is now no clear determination of their background. Events of the times seem to have caused many names to be given roads in those days, some we can understand, others remain mysteries.

The Lafayette Road no longer runs to that city; the Rio Grande Road may have been named during the war with Mexico; and the reason for the name of the Bloomington Road is obvious, but what of the Bono Road?

The Army Road we know was the route of Harrison's army, the Darwin and Carlisle roads are understandable, but many others are far from clear, their meaning buried in years gone by.

Persons who are novices at delving in local history are constantly puzzled by the names of streets and how they have changed over the years. A close study of city directories and maps will help these newcomers understand our city and how it grew. There's usually a logical explanation to be found before an outrageous comment is made about our fair city. Natives may not wear grass skirts, but they're touchy about untruths reported about their homegrounds.

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Ts MAR 3 1 1985

primitive...

When Hoosier roads were truly

Clark, Dorothy + Reed's Street / Nashville Street

Historically speaking

Clark is Vigo County's official historian and formerly worked for The Terre Haute Tribune.

By Dorothy Clark
Special to The Tribune-Star

Pioneers who settled in Indiana were well aware of the problems of overland transportation. Hoosier roads were primitive, nothing more than Indian trails or buffalo traces. According to old settlers' reminiscences, every township in every county suffered from poor to indifferent roads.

They complained of being mud-bound for at least two months, that it was impossible to drive a load of corn over the stump-infested roads. Spring cloudbursts turned the so-called roads into navigable streams, they said. Farmers living along county roads complained that drivers tore down rail fences to drive over their meadows and around deep mud holes, and it was common practice to borrow fence rails to improve a corduroy road.

When local residents grumbled, it was pointed out that the state merely surveyed the roads. Maintenance was left to the township or county. Landowners along the right of way were required to contribute money or labor in proportion to the value of the property served by the road.

The individualistic pioneers, already confused and irritated, decided they were being overcharged and refused to meet the demands of the authorities. It was the custom of Hoosier farmers to work on the county roads at least one day a year. Many worked far more than that to try to keep up a good road past their place. They considered it their duty to do so.

In the 1840s, stage coach travel averaged only five miles an hour. All roads had some sections that were virtually impassablein the rainy season, except on horseback.

When the time came to market corn or wheat, the frontier farmer faced a real problem along with the pioneer merchants. Profits were eaten up by the cost of delivery, and it became necessary to transform farm products to a more compact unit.

In the case of corn, the grain became more profitable and portable if it were made potable by converting it into whiskey. Oats and other grains were fed to stock then delivered on the hoof. Hogs fattened on corn provided their own transportation when driven to market.

During the first 10 years of Vigo County's organized existence, 1818-1828, 60 roads were established, most of them between 1818-1823. The principal road in 1823 was the Vincennes Road which went south on Second Street to Poplar, west to First and Oak, then south.

Another road, once known as the Indian Trace as it was well treaded by local Indians, left Water and Poplar streets, then west down the hill to the bottom land, and south along the river bank to the Indian ford. The main road north followed the river bank to Indian Ripple ford located two miles north of town.

Vigo County did not inherit from the old turnpike system a fine length of improved roads as did some Indiana counties. Only 30 percent of the roads had been improved (gravelled) in Vigo County in 1905. The first improved roads were built as late as 1898.

While serving as engineer for the

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construction of the ditch and levee along the Wabash River in Parke County in 1884, John T. Campbell observed a woman emptying her straw tick mattress onthe very sandy road in front of her house. He noticed that along the 30 feet of roadway where the straw had been tramped into and mixed with the sand, the miry sand road had become as firm and solid as dry clay in two day's time.

A few days later he observed several sheaves of oats had been dropped from a wagon on the same sandy road, and that one had become unbound and tramped into the sand. It too had made the road firm in that section. He unbound the other sheaves and scattered them along the road so that the loose straw was about four inches deep. In a few days that part became firm also.

Carrying on these experiments for several months, Campbell discovered that when mud roads are frozen dry and then covered by six inches of loose straw, they will remain solid through the remainder of the winter and spring. This was the topic of a paper he read before the Society of Indiana Surveyors and Civil Engineers.

Horse drawn vehicles did not wear turnpikes much except on steep grades. There heavy wagons would have to be braked to the extent that wheels often skidded all the way downhill. Soon deep ruts were cut allowing runoff water to wash out the roadway.

Horseless carriages played havoc with roads. Cars literally ripped macadam to pieces or left it a "devil's washboard," where previously wagons and carriages had packed gravel and mud the harder.

County highway officials believed auto tires created a mysterious suction on gravel, thereby destroying roads. Dust and dirt from the roads was indescribable until the late 1930s.

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TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA

When Wabash Ave. was 80 feet wide...

Clark, Dorothy
History (Art)
OCT 19 1985
Roads, Streets, Highways (Art)

Historically speaking

Clark is Vigo County's official historian and formerly worked for The Terre Haute Tribune.

By Dorothy Clark
Special to The Tribune-Star

Community Affairs File

Wabash Avenue was Terre Haute's principal business street 90 years ago. It was more than 80 feet wide and paved with brick. Limestone paving blocks from nearby quarries were used to pave the sidewalks. Artificial stone (as concrete was called in those days) was becoming popular for the sidewalks in front of the fine mansions on Seventh, Sixth, Fifth, Cherry and Ohio streets near downtown.

Public transportation was furnished on 20 miles of street car lines. Even the great Terre Haute races or Barnum's circus couldn't draw crowds so huge that the electric cars weren't able to clear the grounds and speed the people back to their homes in 10 or 15 minutes.

The city was proud of its crematory 90 years ago. It turned all city garbage into clean ashes — anything from a dead horse to a barrel of liquid slop. It was located near the west end of the Wabash River bridge.

The Wabash River traffic had slowed down considerably 90 years ago, but corn was still being hauled in to the huge Hudnut Co.'s mills here, the largest in the world. Begun in 1852 and incorporated in 1886, the mills employed 350 men in the manufacturing of white corn goods using 22,000 bushels of corn a day. Products were shipped all over the world. B.G. Hudnut, president, also owned mills at Pekin, Ill., and Mt. Vernon, Ind.

Bement, Rea & Co., wholesale grocers, had moved into new quarters at Eighth and Wabash and Eighth and Cherry streets. Their trade included western and southern Indiana and eastern Illinois.

Hoberg, Root & Co., the oldest dry goods store in the city, was originally founded in 1856 by Rice, Edsall & Co., and later by Max F. Hoberg, Lewis B. Root and Alfred Hoberg who retired in 1894. Situated at 30-32 N. Sixth St. and 518-520 Wabash Ave. in 1893, they were planning the larger Root Store on Wabash Avenue, between Sixth and Seventh streets.

The Havens & Geddes Co. was an outgrowth of the old Buckeye Cash Store. This department store at 500-506 Wabash was to suffer a disastrous fire in 1898.

Herz Bazaar was 26 years old 90 years ago, the largest exclusive ladies' furnishings store in Indiana. Located at 602-606 Wabash, it was owned by A. Herz.

Myers Brothers secured a 10-year lease on the entire building at the southwest corner of Fourth and Main to expand their department store. Previously occupying only a small part of the building, Emil and Marx Myers began the business in 1880.

Pixley & Co. began business here in 1878 as one of the several stores owned by the Owen, Pixley & Co. of Utica, N.Y. In 1885, however, the firm dissolved, and the Terre Haute store was operated by George H. Greenman. The new firm of Henry D. and George W. Pixley operated about 20 other clothing stores in leading cities across the country. They were the originators of the "one price" idea, which became very popular.

Located at 512-514 Wabash, a few years later they would take Samuel C. Budd as store manager. He had managed the A. C. Bryce store since 1888.

Goodman & Hirschler, 410 Wabash Ave., began business in 1871 offering merchant tailoring, gents' furnishings and clothing. Originally established by Leopold Goodman Sr., the business was run 90 years ago by Leopold Jr. and Simon A. Hirschler.

The largest and most important industry in Terre Haute 90 years ago was the Terre Haute Car Manufacturing Co. which employed 1,000 men. It built railroad cars, wheels, forgings, castings machinery and architectural iron works, the largest in the country.

Established in 1867 and incorporated in 1871, they were located at the southeast corner of 10½ and Crawford Streets. Officers were James Seath, president; Lewis J. Cox, vice president; John S. Cox, secretary; and Robert S. Cox, general manager.

One of the largest dry goods stores in the city 90 years ago was Kleeman Dry Goods Co., 601-605 Wabash Ave., established in 1890 by Samuel and Phillip S. Kleeman.

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Traveling 'Army Road'

Clark, Dorothy ~~Historical (VC)~~ ~~Bridges (VC)~~

Valley's covered bridges link eras

Tribune OCT 20 1985

Community Affairs File

Historically speaking

Clark is Vigo County's official historian and formerly worked for The Terre Haute Tribune.

By Dorothy Clark
Special to The Tribune-Star

The earliest settlements in Vigo County were along the Wabash River or upon the banks of the creeks that flowed into the river. Waterways then were the only routes of travel.

The pioneer settlements on Honey Creek and Prairie Creek, known later as Prairieton and Middletown, were both on or near the trail followed by William Henry Harrison and his army on their way to the Battle of Tippecanoe, a route later called "The Army Road."

This was the first of Vigo County's roads, the one used by those traveling from Vincennes to Fort Harrison and on to the Indian town at the mouth of the Tippecanoe River. Now we know it as the Prairieton Road and the Lafayette Road.

After Vigo County was established in 1818, one of the first acts of the new county commissioners was to make plans and let contracts for bridges over streams that Harrison's army had been compelled to ford or ferry.

These first bridges were primitive culverts. The first one of any size, the one over Honey Creek on the Prairieton Road, was built in 1821 by Greene and Mallory at a cost of $275. In 1822 the first bridge was built over Otter Creek by Robert Graham for about $300. These primitive bridges were followed by covered bridges.

Covered bridges are definitely Early American. The first American bridge patent was issued Jan. 21, 1797, to Charles W. Peale, the famed portrait painter of George Washington, for a covered bridge built eight years later.

In the days when our country was young, the farmer was carpenter and builder. A man who knew his wood when it stood in the forest, he felled his own timber, seasoned it and hewed the logs himself.

He knew which wood was appropriate for its different uses — cedar for fence posts, chests and closets; black gum for plowshares; apple for saw handles; oak for building and joining; pine for furniture and floors; hickory for barrel hoops; and chestnut for cooperage.

The pioneer went by the sayings of his ancestors: "If you'd have your timbers lay, hewe them out in March or May. When the moon is new to full, timber fibers warp and pull."

Early settlers believed that bridges were covered for the same reason that women wore petticoats, "to protect their underpinnings."

Although the first pioneer never saw one, the covered bridges are just old enough to be an important link in American history. They seem to mark the time between the horse and buggy and the automobile.

Two types of covered bridges were built in this area, depending on the supply of yellow poplar or tulip poplar trees. Major Ogden of the U.S. Army Engineers, was the government supervisor here for the National Road, which was surveyed through Vigo County in 1834. Workmen reached Terre Haute in 1837.

Under his supervision, substantial bridges were built across the larger streams. More than half a million dollars was spent in Indiana on bridges alone, most of them covered bridges.

One long covered bridge spanned Lost Creek at what is now 19th and Wabash. It was painted bright yellow. Later Lost Creek was rechannelled to empty into the Wabash River north of the city instead of south.

Before the Civil War, this bridge was removed to Otter Creek at Markle's Mill to replace an older bridge there. In 1838 there was a red-painted covered bridge on the National Road, which spanned Sugar Creek west of Macksville or West Terre Haute.

Few people realize that Indiana had many covered wooden bridges on its early railroads. The development of rail lines in Indiana occurred in the 1850s, as compared to covered wagon bridges, which were in use as early as the 1830s.

Historian George E. Gould said railroad bridges reached their peak in popularity and in number by 1880. The last railroad covered bridge in use was "Old Nellie," which until 1930 carried trains over the east fork of the White River in Greene County.

In his book, "Indiana Covered Bridges Through the Years," Gould mentions some 25 railroad bridges and later research added more. The first covered bridges on railroads reaching Indiana were built by Stephen Daniels, father of the famous "J. J." He used the Long truss. The Burr arch truss was used whenever possible by the Kennedy family and J. J. Daniels, our two most prolific builders. They hated to pay the fee on the Howe patent as well as the metal straps holding the ends of the braces.

However, Daniels on occasion was forced by competition to use the Howe plan. Also, the Kennedys used Howe trusses when they came west in 1884 to build the 600-foot Old Nellie bridge. This truss used five vertical rods per panel, with the inner and outer rods noticeably heavier than the inner three.

The number of covered bridges built on Indiana railroads is difficult to estimate because records would belong to private railroad companies. They were built as cheaply and as rapidly as possible in the early days, and the switch to stronger iron structures began in the 1870s.

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Life on rails aboard the old T.H. & I.

Clark, Dorothy
Ts OCT 2 5 1987

Historically speaking

Clark retired as The Tribune-Star women's editor in 1980. She has written a local history column for 30 years. She is Vigo County Historian.

By Dorothy J. Clark
Special to The Tribune-Star

The years of 1855-57 were the happy days of railroading, especially on the Terre Haute and Indianapolis Railroad, according to one old-time railroader, Henry M. Hawley, who lived in Terre Haute after the turn of the century.

"Trains were run by time card in those days," he said. "There were no telegraph operators or train dispatchers. A local train of 17 cars from Indianapolis to Terre Haute could earn $700 in the late 1850s without worrying that a large percentage would revert to the State of Indiana."

Hawley said railroading was more relaxed in those days. In the spring, Andy Beck and Charles Glaisier would gather up a car load of eggs at 3 cents a dozen. In August, 2-gallon wooden buckets full of blackberries would be ready for Sam Murry on his arrival in Terre Haute.

Conductor Benjamin Hubbs of the express train, and Robert McEwan wore silk hats. Their white collars could make several trips without becoming soiled with coal soot. The locomotive burned wood.

Freight brakemen were allowed the privilege of wiping the engine at the end of the trip so they could earn their $1.25 a day. The firemen scoured the bell and brass bands on the jacket.

Hawley told how Samuel Trindle faithfully warmed a baggage car. When the Civil War began he received a deserved promotion.

When William Baugh left Terre Haute with the inside-connected engine "Boston," and reached the top of Greencastle Hill, he would send her over the race course like a bird if he had William Sherburne to feed wood in the fire box.

Isa Sherburne could set the "Vigo" pump at the freight house at 10th and Main streets in Terre Haute and not change until he backed out of the Union Depot at Indianapolis. There were no injectors on the engines of the T. H. & I Railroad in 1857.

Farmers along the line would set their clocks by the time of the passing train. Stockholders were happy when the railroad's president could present his annual report stating no serious derailment had occurred, no passenger or employee had suffered death or severe injury on the road during the year.

The first railroad in Indiana was built over a period of eight years from Madison to Indianapolis and was completed in 1847. Then Chauncey Rose organized a company to build a railroad between Terre Haute and Indianapolis.

Road grading was begun at both ends working towards each other. Some land owners were reluctant to sell right-of-way, so unnecessary curves had to be constructed in the roadway. The two sections were finally joined at Greencastle.

During the building of the railroad, passengers used stage coaches between the sections. The trip took 10 hours. Later the same trip was made regularly in an hour and 50 minutes. ted in 1852, the T. H. & I., as it was called, became the Vandalia, and later the Pennsylvania. It had a rolling stock of seven engines, three passenger cars, one baggage car, one mail car, 40 boxcars, 30 platform cars, and 70 gravel cars.

The iron rails were sent to New Orleans from the western mills, then by boat to Madison, from there to Terre Haute by train via Indianapolis, although some rails and tracks were brought by canal boat.

The first railroad station was built on the south side of Wabashat 10th Street where the railroads later passed the C. & E. I. freight station.

The next station was located at 10th and Chestnut. Union Station, known for its beautiful park, was opened in August 1893.

The first train ran to Rockville on Nov. 24, 1860. The rails were furnished by T. H. & I. while the people of Parke County built the bridges and grades.

In the 109 miles between Terre Haute and Evansville there were 21 stations: Hartford, Sibley's, Currysville, Sullivan, Carlisle, Shepard's, Busseron, Emison's, Vincennes, Purcell's, Decker's, Robb's, Field's, Patoka, Princeton, King's, LaGrange, Haub's, Nash's, Ingle's, and Prairieton Road.

Freight leaving Terre Haute at 6:45 a.m. would reach Evansville at 4:35 p.m. Passenger and mail would leave at 12:45 p.m. and reach their destination at 6:15 p.m.

Engineers were warned on approaching the crossing of the Ohio & Mississippi Railroad to reduce speed to four miles per hour and to be sure the road was clear before attempting to pass.

In the 171 years of Indiana's existence, transportation has changed drastically from the days of the Indian traveling the buffalo trails. The pioneer followed the National Road. The railroad was built along side this road when possible. The interurban was built parallel to the road and the railroad. Modern autos and buses now drive over the paved National Road or Interstate 70. Overhead, airplanes follow the white ribbons of concrete.

The happy days of railroading are gone; diesel engines have taken over from the early wood-burning locomotives. The days of special delivery of fresh eggs, butter and blackberries are gone forever.

Sidewalk stairways

Downtown's steps of history have all been removed

TS APR 08 1990

Clark, Dorothy

Historically speaking

Clark retired as The Tribune-Star women's editor in 1980. She has written a local history column for 30 years. She is Vigo County Historian.

By Dorothy J. Clark
Special to The Tribune-Star

Obeying Newton's law of gravity that stated, "whatever goes up must come down," Terre Haute has lost all the old sidewalk stairways once located in the downtown area.

Some of these stairways went up to the second-floor offices, others went down to the basement business rooms. These old landmarks also have disappeared in the march of progress.

Terre Haute's most senior attorney, George A. Scott, told in 1939 about noticing an old landmark had been removed. This was the outside stairway on the building at the southeast corner of Fifth Street and Wabash Avenue (now a parking lot of First National Bank).

This stairway, made of iron risers and wooden treads, was put in place when the building was erected about 1858.

A stairway down to the basement was used only for passage to the basement.

For about 20 years or more prior to 1940, the space underneath the "up" stairway had been enclosed and made into a place to sell merchandise. It was first used by the Good Luck Butterine salesmen, and later for hot-dog and soft-drink vending purposes.

According to Scott, the sidewalk had been built over the space originally used for the stairway to the basement. The stairway to the second floor had been removed, but the platform was left in place and an opening cut next to the building with a short-iron ladder built on the side of the building for a sort of fire escape.

On the second floor were law, real-estate and insurance offices. Among the early occupants were B.F. Havens, insurance and law; William Biel Sr., insurance; James H. Caldwell, Edmunds and other law offices from 1904 to 1924; Van Zandt and A.A. Dix had real-estate offices.

For many years, the Yates Hat Store occupied the first-floor store room. It was famous for its sign hanging in front. It depicted a huge, black bear standing up and holding a tree branch in his paws.

Eliza and Frank Yates were the popular children of this store owner during the 1870s and 1880s.

On the northwest corner of Fifth and Wabash, an old wooden stairway used to furnish access to the second floor. At one time this building was occupied by Wilson Brothers and Hunley; Tuell, Ripley and Deming; a dry-goods store; and Philip Schloss, men's clothing.

The second floor was used for offices, and Ed Seldomridge edited a newspaper from this building space.

The stairway started near Wabash Avenue and went up toward the north. It was destroyed during the Havens & Geddes fire of 1896. The White Building occupies the site presently.

On the southeast corner of Sixth and Wabash, an old sidewalk stairway once led to the basement. Originally guarded by an iron railing, this stairway was on South Sixth, starting near Wabash and going down toward the south.

The storeroom was occupied by W.S. Rice, later by Havens & Geddes when they operated the Buckeye Cash Store, then by Ford & Overstreet, men's wear, and then by Kleeman Brothers.

This building was torn down to make way for a new Montgomery Ward building which has also been razed. The site is now the location of the new Terre Haute First National Bank.

On South Sixth Street, the entrance to the old Prairie City Bank was gained by a set of iron steps which started out in the sidewalk and went up four or five steps to the doorway.

On one side of these "up" steps was a stairway leading down to Captain Hector's plumbing shop in the basement. This "down" stairway was guarded by iron railings. Hector was captain of the governor's guard, a militia unit at that time.

From Third to Fourth streets on the south side of Ohio, the whole block was originally built with the storeroom floors raised about 14 inches with steps extending from the sidewalks to the floor levels. Each store room had a stairway to the basement.

Andy Gallagher was located at 311 Ohio St. at one time. About 1905, the floors were lowered, and about 1930 the basement stairways were removed.

On the west side of Fourth Street, south of Cherry, a basement stairway led down to the room where John Boggs operated a bakery.

There were stairways to the basements at 310 and 312 Ohio, and between these two stairways, there was also one to the second floor. All stairways extended out on the sidewalk.

This building was just east of the old temporary courthouse on the northeast corner of Third and Ohio where the second floor was used for a court room in the 1870s and 1880s.

The east storage room was used as a saloon by William Shaul and was a popular gathering place at that time. The west room was used as the county auditor's office.

The stairway at Quinlan's Seed Store, 317 Wabash, became famous in local history. This stairway was in the alley on the west side of the building.

During the Civil War the building was occupied by the Foote Seed Store, later by the Ryan Funeral Home, and then by Hoerman's Seed Store, before becoming Quinlan's.

John T. Scott, father of George A. Scott, occupied law offices on the second floor. During the election in November 1864, Judge Scott went down this stairway to protest against soldiers from Massachusetts and Connecticut, then quartered at the old fairgrounds across the road from the north end of what is now Collett Park, voting in the local election.

The soldiers forced Judge Scott to return to his office at the points of bayonets and proceeded to vote.

Daniel Voorhees was elected to Congress in 1862, 1864, and 1866, but in the last election his seat was contested in Congress and he was voted out by a Republican majority. At that time every county and city office in Vigo County was held by Democrats.

Another famous sidewalk stairway was the one near the southwest corner of Sixth and Wabash. On Sixth Street, it led down to the basement where Voorhees Griffith had a bicycle shop. The old National House Hotel occupied the area above. The stairway was finally discontinued and iron doors closed the opening.

The last sidewalk stairway in downtown Terre Haute was on the Shandy Building at the northwest corner of Third and Wabash, starting near Wabash and extending north and upward. This building housed a series of drugstore owners over the years: Lowery, McGrew, Casto, Reiss, Shandy and last the Gillis Drug Co.

The outside stairway led to the law offices once used by David A. Donaldson, then by his son Frank Donaldson (one-time mayor), then by Justice of Peace Scott and Thomas C. Smith. Thomas J. Corey was the last tenant of the law offices.

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Clark, Dorothy (F) Streets, Street Names (K)

Street names change again

Terre Haute streets from Wabash north were renamed by council

TS JUN 20 1993

(22)

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Historically speaking

Clark retired as the Tribune-Star's women's editor in 1980. She has written a local history column since 1956. She is Vigo County historian.

By Dorothy J. Clark
Special to the Tribune-Star

Back in 1854, Chauncey Rose platted and recorded his new subdivision containing a little more than 47 acres, bounded on the south by the National Road, on the west and north by the Terre Haute & Richmond Railroad, and on the east by a line dividing the east and west halves of Section 22.

This irregular piece of real estate contained streets whose names are unfamiliar to readers now some 139 years later.

The City Council, in its wisdom, saw fit to change the names of the streets as shown on the original plat. The National Road became Wabash Avenue; Cherry Street, east of the railroad, became Mulberry Street; Mulberry Street, east of the railroad, became Eagle; Eagle, east of the railroad, became Chestnut; Elk Street became 11th; Fawn Street became 12th; and Prairie Street became 13th Street.

In the early days, the northwest corner of 11th and Wabash was the site of a small blacksmith shop where local repairs for the first railroad, then the only one passing through town, were made. The first buildings of the Vandalia shops were under construction.

It was Chauncey Rose who secured the right-of-way for an across-state railroad, the object being to build across the state to connect with lines running to the east.

Selected as terminals were Richmond on the east and Terre Haute on the west. As early as 1852, the line was completed as far as Indianapolis, and the first train had run over it.

In those days, in order to get an engine to Terre Haute, it was necessary to bring it down the Ohio River and up the Wabash & Erie Canal to Terre Haute. This was the route of the first engine to draw a train out of town.

The man who supervised the journey of that engine to town was Charles R. Peddle, a man who impressed Chauncey Rose with his skills and competence. People came from miles around to witness the coming of the first locomotive to Terre Haute.

People left their homes and jobs to watch this important event, the unloading of a monster-sized locomotive. Opinions were expressed as to whether or not it could be done. Many believed it could never be unloaded. Bets were made and lost.

Thomas Laws, who operated the previously mentioned blacksmith shop at 11th and Wabash, assisted with any repair work along with the building of the railroad shops then under construction.

William Baugh, a Terre Haute resident, was the engineer when the first train was run from Terre Haute to Indianapolis in 1852. This convinced Wabash Valley residents that Terre Haute was now one of the important cities in the state and nation.

In 1857, Daniel Debs, father of Eugene V. Debs, purchased for only a few hundred dollars the northeast corner of 11th and Wabash, directly across from the blacksmith shop on the northwest corner.

A few years later, the Debs family purchased the northwest corner, and in 1860 put up a building. Some 45 years later, that building was wrecked to enable Western Refining Co. to build its "modern oil and gasoline station" there. The Debs' heirs were paid $19,000 for the site.

E.V. Debs was not as well known as he became in later years as leader of the Socialist Party. As a railroader, he was busily pointing out to his fellow workers the differences in the social system as it existed then. Debs began his work in the local railroad shops in 1870, the same year that the section of the T.H. & Richmond Railroad lying east of Indianapolis was sold to the Pan-Handle lines, and the local railroad became the T.H. & I.

It was also the same year that the first train ran through Terre Haute to St. Louis over the Vandalia lines, named for the small town of Vandalia, Ill., then the capitol of the state, where Abraham Lincoln gained prominence in the state Legislature.

It was in 1870 that Debs had the opportunity of firing Engine No. 1, the first ever to come to Terre Haute, which at that time was being used as a switch engine in the railroad yards.

This must have been a frequently told tale when he was gaining prominence as a Socialist Party member, the rabble-rousing speechmaker and labor organizer. His term as Terre Haute city clerk was not as exciting as piloting a steam engine. This writer has in her files a dog license he filled out and signed while holding the city political office.

Sewers were problem in 1890s

Clark, Dorothy
TS AUG 15

Historically speaking

Clark retired as the Tribune-Star's women's editor in 1980. She has written a local history column since 1956. She is Vigo County historian.

By Dorothy J. Clark
Special to the Tribune-Star

According to John A. Cole, engineer, Terre Haute's Chestnut Street or "canal" was the first work of the kind undertaken by the city. It was started in 1873 (120 years ago), and the main outlet was laid in the old Wabash & Erie Canal basin.

He was in Terre Haute in 1896 to work up a plan to relieve the old first sewer. The total cost of the system of sewers which drained into this main sewer was estimated to be about $131,000 at that time. The acreage inside the city limits drained by this system was about 1,000.

This attempt to drain nearly the entire city into this one outlet-sewer had been disastrous so far as sewerage was concerned. From 1873 to 1896, the surface water during heavy storms flooded the sewer, gorging it, and backing the water into cellars and basements.

It was not probable that those who designed the city's first sewer ever intended for it to take care of such a large area. But, there was no other outlet, and the need for removing water from streets was urgent, and the habitat was formed of building shallow drains to intercept surface water without regard to the effect this would have on the main sewer.

Engineer Cole proposed to relieve the district by cutting off the flow of surface water from the lands outside the city including 1,000 acres of city area, leaving less than 700 acres to be drained by the Chestnut Street sewer.

By this plan he would use all the money that had been expended and would afford safe and ample sewerage facilities for the greater part of the Sixth, Eighth, Ninth and 10th Wards. The canal outlet was considered conveniently located and of ample size for the area which he had outlined.

In order to cut off so large an area from this district, it became necessary to provide another main sewer which would not only drain the 1,000 acres, then imperfectly drained by the canal sewer, but would give relief to the First, Second and Third Wards, which had no drainage in 1896.

Cole planned to start in the 10th Ward at Seventh Street and Sixth Avenue, and in the Ninth Ward at Maple Avenue and 13th Street. These two branches would come together at 13th and Sixth Avenue, then go east to 15th Street, then to 10th, then south to Hulman Street.

For this sewer he proposed two outlets, either on College or on Hulman to the Wabash River. Public opinion seemed to favor Hulman.

Cole's sewer design called for 48-inch diameter at the extreme north and western ends, and 84-inch diameter at Hulman. At the northern limits of the city on 13th Street, the depth was more than 12 feet, giving ample possibility for extending the system to the subdivisions which were still outside the city at that time.

Until this sewer, called the "belt," was constructed there was no relief for the Chestnut or canal sewer district. From the river bluff to Maple Avenue, the cost of the belt sewer was estimated to be less than $200,000, and with annual appropriations being made it could be paid before 1900.

As soon as the work reached Crawford Street, the relief of the Chestnut Street district began to be felt and when Poplar Street was reached, there was to be no further gorging of the canal sewer.

Engineer Cole felt there was no other way for 25,000 to 30,000 residents of the city, absolutely with no relief in 1896, to be so quickly and economically provided with means for the removal of surface water and household wastes from their dwellings.

Cole's report stated that no city in the United States with the population of Terre Haute was so poorly provided with sewers. This condition had been tolerated in the past because the city had been built on porous soil which has reduced the evil of this unsanitary defect "which is retarding the material prosperity and effecting the healthfulness of the growing city."

The City Council either did not understand his plan, or were reluctant to study it and make a decision. The plans laid on the desk at City Hall for six weeks.

Finally, the committee on sewers and the alderman representing more than 20,000 inhabitants approved the plan. It was hoped that public opinion would be aroused by all the newspaper coverage and support.

This his how our fair city got its sewer problems solved in 1896, almost a century ago! After heavy rains it still seems as if some solving of sewer problems might be in order when nearly every intersection is a lake, and basements are flooded and pedestrians have to ford sizable streams to cross streets. Septic tanks pollute our park's creeks and ponds, while many residents still lack sewer connections. Growing pains for expanding city services continues to be a problem.

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Community Affairs File

Roads always concern in area

*Clark, Dorothy

Ts APR 12 1992

Historically speaking

Clark retired as The Tribune-Star's women's editor in 1980. She has written a local history column since 1956. She is Vigo County Historian.

By Dorothy J. Clark
Special to The Tribune-Star

It was H.D. Scott, president of the Terre Haute Literary Society, who said, "Our roads are nearly all too wide, there is need of but enough to travel upon."

"In cities," he continued, "wide roads are important, but in the country, narrower roads are preferable."

As to how to keep up roads is more important. For this reason he believed narrow streets were better. "We too often work without a system," he said. "Our supervisors usually work according to their own private views, with no general system. It is very difficult to keep up a road in yellow clay districts."

Scott argued that a basis of operation should be adopted, the route surveyed, the grade established, the drainage looked after. In many places he would use blocks of wood a foot long placed on end. This he considered practical in many localities.

"We can have better roads," he said, "by having a better system of roads."

When it was C.W. Barbour's turn, he said, "We work our roads too much." He feared the block system was too expensive. In parts where no drainage could be effected and gravel was absent, "we must conform to the season and haul when roads are dry. Drainage is indispensable."

Proper work done at the proper time was the salvation of public highways. Barbour was in favor of letting out the care of, or the building of roads by contract. He strongly believed clay roads or gravel roads were necessary to Vigo County.

J.O. Jones thought this county had the poorest roads in the state. "Yet we have the finest gravel in abundance," he observed. "We dissipate our funds in building railroads; the law is good, we need brains in the overseer of roads."

A.B. Pegg was in favor of broad roads and sufficient taxation. "Almost every county in the state," he said, "has a better system of roads. Gravel underlies our prairies."

G.H. Whidden thought 40 feet narrow enough. He urged more draining, and thought a lack of energy and of system was the source of our trouble.

Cory Barbour thought 40 feet was wide enough. He commented, "We must have a heavier tax to create a fund."

He urged filling the sides as well as the grade to make the water run off into the fields. He believed roads should be worked early in the spring, not in the fall. He agreed the present law is good enough if carried out.

George Scholz was in favor of giving road work to competent men who have judgment.

B.F. Sulley was in favor of turnpikes in real clay soil.

Mrs. Joseph Gilbert said it was the height of her ambition, when women got the vote, to become supervisor. Then she would assuredly make a difference in some of the roads.

B.F. Markle thought it important to build good roads near the city.

Herman Hulman gave an interesting description of the roads of Holland made of brick thrice burned that were very durable.

Mrs. Pegg wanted to work under Mrs. Gilbert, and then, she believed, some of our thoroughfares would be better.

Mr. Sulley thought our climate was not adapted to road brick.

J. Weir thought our wagon tires should be wider. We needed better supervisors, and, thirdly, that he would vote for Gilbert.

Scott, president of the Literary Society, closed the discussion conducted to "elicit thought for the future benefit of Vigo County." He believed the brick question was feasible and practicable.

Future historians can follow up this discussion and determine if it was helpful. Did the roads improve? Who would benefit from the sale of enough bricks to convert our county roads from unsatisfactory dirt, gravel and clay?

I can remember brick streets in town, but never out in the country.

The first "improved" muddy road in Indiana was supposedly accomplished by an energetic housewife who carried her straw bedding out of the house each spring cleaning and dumped it in the road that ran in front of her property.

As time went by, everyone noticed she had the best roadway (and undoubtedly a cleaner house!). Sounds like Earth Day recycling to me before it was talked about so much.

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Main Street 1880

*Clark, Dorothy

Numbered addresses were assigned for mail delivery

Ts JUL 12 1992

Early advertisers in Terre Haute newspapers gave their location on Main Street by numbers that began at the Wabash River or Water Street and ran continuously eastward.

Under this system there seemed to be no street number higher than about 158.

But in the summer of 1876, when delivery by mail carriers was desired instead of going to the post office to pick up one's mail, a group of citizens petitioned the City Council to adopt the Philadelphia system of numbering homes and buildings.

An ordinance for this purpose was passed by the council in August, and mail delivery by carriers started Oct. 1, 1879.

There were new addresses on Main Street beginning at Water Street and continuing east on the south side were four grocery stores with beer sold in the rear rooms. At No. 7 was Thomas A. Cox, followed by J.W. Mund at No. 9, Marlin G. Rhoads at No. 13, and Jane Lundy at No. 15.

On the north side was the Early House, a small hotel on high ground 10 feet or so above the street. At No. 14 and east of the alley at No. 28 was another grocery kept by Stevenson & Spolts, and at the corner of First at No. 30 was that of Hiram J. Foltz in the building long known as "Vinegar Hill." There were six "Last Chances" in one block.

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On the south side east of First was Henry Hahn's grocery at 113, and Xavier Hahn's boot and shoe shop at 115.

On the north side at the corner was No. 100, occupied for many years by Bauermeister & Busch with a wholesale grocery.

Charles A. Powers had his seed store at 106; H.S. McKenzie's saloon was at 114. Jacob Early had his insurance office at 118, while next door at 120 was the office of S.S. Early, meat packer.

Robertson & Crowther had a grocery at 128, and at 130 on the corner was Louis Kanneer's butcher shop.

The courthouse square stood empty in 1880 so no addresses were listed, but on the north side stood the St. Clair House, later the Indois, at No. 200.

Next to it was Alix Smock's grocery at 206. Fisbeck Brothers had a harness shop at 212. Clark Holdaway had a grocery at 214; Charles P. Staub's livery stable stood at 218.

Long's drug store was 220; 222 was the saloon of Frank Lee; 224 was a barbershop run by Joshua Davis; and a rival barber shop owned by Robert & Mitchell was at 226.

Next door was the grocery of Enos Strouse at 228. William Broadhurst had a restaurant at 230, and Groves & Lowery had a drug store at the corner of Third.

Diagonally across the streets was the Wholesale Drug House of Cook & Bell. Lowery would join that firm later.

At No. 303 was Richard L. Ball's stove store; at 307 was the chinaware store of H.L. Richardson, known as the "drummer boy." Rice & Walmsley had a carpet store at 309, and William Lotz (pronounced "Lutz" in those days) had a tin store at 311.

The furniture store of E.D. Harvey was at 319; William Wilson had a notion store at 325. This was the forerunner of the "five & ten." G.A. Rogers made boots and shoes at 329 on the corner of Fourth.

On the north side at the corner No. 300 was the Boot & Shoe Shop of Daniel Reibold. Next door at 302 was the clothing store of Lee Hirsch. Stephen R. Freeman had his jewelry store for many years at 304, until he was succeeded by Sam Sterchi.

At 306 was the seed store of Joseph A. Foote. Next door at 310 was the shoe store of William H. Robbins, and at 312 was the harness shop of Farley & Roach. At 314 was another shoe store owned by H. Clark & Son. G. and L. Monninger had a saloon and billiard parlor at 318.

At 320 was Richard Toernan's millinery store; at 324 Max Joseph had a clothing store where he had moved from Second and Wabash.

A.P. Kivits' shoe store was next at 326, and Gulick & Berry occupied the corner at 330.

No. 401 at the southeast corner of Fourth and Wabash, was the First National Bank. Next door was Henry F. Schmidt & Co., Jewelers, at 403. At 407 was another shoe shop owned by Paddock & Purcell.

Fred J. Biel had a tobacco shop at 409, with Col. W.E. McLean, attorney, on the second floor above him. At 411 was a saloon owned by John M. Confare; Brokaw Brothers had a carpet store at 413; the hardware store of C.C. Smith & Sons was at 417; and J.H. Sykes operated the hat store at 419.

Stein & Hecklesberg were at 421; the clothing store of Adolph Arnold was at 423; A.B. Mewhinney made delicious candy at 425; and Wolk's hardware store was at 427, next door to the National State Bank on the southwest corner of Fifth and Wabash, now the Saratoga Restaurant.

This was Main Street in 1880!

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Sharing memories

Clark, Dorothy

Resident recalls youthful days on North Ninth Street

13 APR 22 1990

Historically speaking

Clark retired as The Tribune-Star women's editor in 1980. She has written a local history column for 30 years. She is Vigo County Historian.

By Dorothy J. Clark
Special to The Tribune-Star

Local residents share their memories of days long gone and leave local history to be enjoyed by present generations of Terre Hauteans.

The story of North Ninth Street between Eagle and Cherry streets was remembered by S. Belle Jonas, daughter of James V. Mattox and Katie Clift Mattox. The family lived in a two-story frame house just north of the old mule streetcar barns.

Katie Mattox's uncle was Billy Clift of Clift & Williams Lumber Mill. She kept a boarding house for the employees of the mill. Jonas could remember seeing some of the workers step from their front porch through the office window of the mill as they returned to work after eating the noon meal. Her father was the engineer at the mill.

According to Jonas, the mule barns were "our south fence line, the mule yard next, and the old Rankin house was next on the northeast corner of Ninth and Mulberry."

A.B. Mewhinney later occupied the old mill which was still in operation when Jonas attended Wiley High School. About that time (1888) her father had a plumbing shop at 23 S. Sixth St. She was his bookkeeper.

Mewhinney's Candy Factory was south of the plumbing shop. Joseph Strong's spice mill was on the northwest corner of Sixth and Ohio. On the north, next to the plumbing shop on the alley, was a high-class barber shop where B. C. Hoban could make her father shine! The National Hotel was prominent then.

Grace Pence, the mother of Charles Pence who owned the River View Mill located on the southeast corner of First and Farrington streets (where Dreiser Square Housing is now), recalled the year 1889 when she was baptized in the Wabash River just under where the covered bridge stood. It was a toll-bridge at that time, and John Patterson was the caretaker.

Pence recalled that when she was 16 years old her school class walked the railroad bridge many times to study physical geography in the hills at Lyford (they called it "Clinton Locks" at that time).

They studied at the mounds in that area, and Pence recalled the students found several tomahawks and other Indian items.

From the time of her baptism, she could recall the many changes, the "doing away with" the covered bridge, the building of the present bridge, the grade being constructed between Terre Haute and West Terre Haute, and the river flooding the bottom lands every spring. (Note: The date of the present bridge is 1905.)

The theatrical news of Terre Haute was written up in a 1907 copy of "Billboard" magazine. During the month of March that year, the city was slated for the best in theater and vaudeville.

T.W. Barhydt, manager of the Grand Opera House, was showing "The Rocky Road to Dublin," followed by "Show Girl," and capacity crowds for "Uncle Tom's Cabin."

For two- or three-day stands, local theater-goers saw James J. Corbett, "While Frisco Burns," Emma Carus in "Too Near Home," "Dorothy Vernon of Haddon Hall," and "Ways of the Transgressor."

At the Lyric Theater, manager Jack Hoeffler was showing: Dixon, Bowers and Dixon; Redwood and Harvey; Lillian Waltone, Parrish, etc.; Charles Ward with Buckley's Trained Dogs; Hanson and Fields, Joe Goodwin and the Rio Trio for a whole week.

At the Coliseum, the Champagne Girls would be followed by the London Gaiety Girls, according to J.H. Barnes, manager.

The Electric Theater was reported to be enjoying "fine business with moving pictures," according to Charles Hoeffler, manager.

One of the greatest enjoyments of the retirement years of James Krayntz of Clinton was to play the old classical clarinet solos. In his younger days, he played clarinet with the John Philip Sousa and Victor Herbert bands and orchestras.

Back in 1931-32, he played with Kilter's Concert Band and the Circus Band.

Sometimes the only way a writer knows whether or not she is reaching her readers is to hear their comments and receive their letters. Whenever a particular column hits a nerve, so to speak, readers are invited to write in their memories, adding names or more information on the subject. These letters are most welcome.

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*Clark, Dorothy

Mail delivery hits Terre Haute

New system brought increased use of mail service

Ts OCT 07 1990

Historically speaking

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By Dorothy J. Clark
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Terre Haute was designed as a free mail delivery city on Oct. 1, 1879, by the Postmaster General. For the first time, city residents would not have to go to the post office to pick up their mail. The letters would be delivered to their homes.

In April of that year, Special Agent Smith of New York City spent several days here laying out the routes, locating the mail boxes, and making all the necessary arrangements for the free postal delivery system.

Under the rules, Terre Haute was designated as a second-class post office, and was allowed six letter carriers and 40 mail boxes. Going to the post office every day to pick up the mail was a real chore for some residents of the growing town. Those who lived on the outskirts and worked during the day had a real problem.

To make the system work, everyone was urged to have their letters addressed to street and house number, not just their name. Those who did not have numbers on their house were urged to do so, and also provide a mail box or mail slot that would be easily reached.

In 1879 there were those who resisted any sign of progress, just as there are in 1990. The rumor was started that property values would be reduced in the area of the post office. It was true that South Sixth was not visited by the large crowds usually seen there. However, people still needed to buy postage stamps, have letters registered, mail packages, etc., so the businessmen of the area did not suffer.

In fact, businessmen in other cities where free delivery was already established said their business was better. Postmaster Nicholas Filbeck deserved credit for his efforts in bringing about the new delivery system.

In 1882, Postmaster J.O. Jones appealed for more help. He stated there was a large increase of business at the post office and the extent of the territory supplied by letter carriers was growing. He asked for one additional first-class carrier with allowance for a horse.

At that time, the office was allowed seven regular carriers at $850 per year, and one auxiliary at $600. The city was divided into seven districts supplied by the seven carriers. The auxiliary was used exclusively in delivering and collecting mail in the business part of town, and, of course, "subbing" for any regular carrier who was ill.

The weight of the mail these men had to carry, and the distance they had to travel, was causing their work to become burdensome.

Jones compared the carrier business of the first eight months of 1880 with the same period of 1882: registered letters, 482-602; out-of-town letters delivered, 57,818-64,590; local letters, 2,606-5,821.

Postcards were very popular as shown by 22,215 compared with 29,011. Local postcards doubled in delivery with 2,782-4,332.

The burdened carriers staggered under 48,888 newspapers, and two years later, 54,062. They collected more than 51,000 letters and 29,000 postcards to take back to the main office.

To better understand the salary schedule of 108 years ago, it must be remembered that the carriers worked about 12 hours a day, of which 10 hours were actually counted as working time. This was six days a week plus Sunday morning. A horse-drawn cart was used for picking up the mail from the letter boxes, and sometimes a bicycle after they became popular.

The postmaster of that day had many duties in addition to his post office work. He was responsible for investigating pension applicants for the government, and had to interview them. He acted as the official arm of the federal government in his hometown.

It was his responsibility to report any dereliction of duty on the part of contract mail drivers between towns. In June 1882, W.S. Griffith delivered and picked up the mail between Prairie Creek and Terre Haute for the handsome sum of $283 per year. He also contracted to get the mail back and forth between Prairie Creek and Merom.

In July, Postmaster Jones had another problem. It seems Henry A. King who kept the country store and was postmaster at Soonover, two and a half miles northwest of Lewis in Pierson Township, decided to "Go West." On his way he stopped off in Terre Haute and left his post office books, stamps and stock with Jones.

Rose Polytechnic Institute was very new in those days, and books were being acquired for their new library. Quite a hassle developed about whether or not a special book rate was possible for the growing library.

Juvenile delinquents were a problem in 1882. One such offender was apprehended for breaking a street letter box with a rock.

In March 1883, Jones objected strenuously when box rental was raised to 50 cents. He reported 110 boxes rented at 25 cents, mostly to farmers who objected to any raise, for any purpose, at any time.

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